

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LONDON LIFE

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BY THE SAME AUTHOR

ENGLISH COUNTRY LIFE  
IN THE 18TH CENTURY

"Enriched by a lovely rhythmic style and a hatred of the unseeing enemy that slays beauty, which endears it to the discerning reader"—*The Observer*.



# EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LONDON LIFE

ROSAMOND BAYNE-POWELL

LONDON

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET, W.

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## AN HISTORICAL SURVEY

THE beginning of the eighteenth century was also the commencement of the reign of Queen Anne. In spite of Marlborough's wars it was a reign of prosperity and contentment. Men looked back upon the civil wars as upon a period of turmoil and horror, from which they had mercifully escaped. Trade was good, literature flourished. The Court set an example in religion and morality. Christian societies and schools were founded, churches were built.

London was loyal to the Queen, and the more responsible section of the community was favourable to the Hanoverian succession. The mob might be Jacobite, with interludes of chapel-burning after the Sacheverell trial; statesmen might correspond with St. Germain; but substantial London citizens had, upon the whole, no wish for any restoration of the Stuarts. The memory of King James and the tyrannical folly of his reign still lingered, with a fear of Rome, that was often quite unreasoning.

London citizens received George I with acclamations of loyalty to which his total ignorance of the English tongue, and an inherent and indomitable ungraciousness, made it difficult for him to respond. He dined on Lord Mayor's Day at the Guildhall, and listened dourly to addresses of welcome which he but dimly understood; but he opened his purse and gave a thousand pounds for the relief of poor debtors. It was a gracious charity and had been the custom of the Kings of England whenever they visited the City.

The Jacobite rebellion of 1715 had its repercussions in London. Men were hanged for high treason or for recruiting for the Pretender. The Riot Act was passed by a nervous Parliament.

Three Jacobite lords were imprisoned in the Tower, together with several other persons; but there was no rising.

The mob surged out along the Barnet road to watch the Jacobite peers and the other prisoners who were brought pinioned into London. They were sent to the Tower or Newgate, and two of them, Lords Derwentwater and Kenmure, were executed. Lord Nithsdale escaped, thanks to the courage and resource of his wife. The rebellion was over.

Marlborough's wars were concluded by the Peace of Utrecht in 1713. The peace was not so favourable to the victors as it might have been, and a smouldering resentment against the old enemy still lingered. Wars and disputes with France, with Spain or with German powers continued. It might have been supposed that the citizens of London, a prosperous trading body, would have realised the futility and disaster of war; but it has taken us two more centuries to perceive that truism.

The wars of the eighteenth century, moreover, were very different from those of modern days.

When, in 1738, Captain Jenkins sailed into the Port of London with one of his ears in a cardboard box, and a tale that it had been cut off by the Spanish coastguards he was readily believed. A few men might protest that they knew Captain Jenkins and that he had lost his ear in the pillory, but no one paid any attention to them.

When war was at last declared, the bells of the City rang out and bonfires blazed.

"They are ringing their bells now," said Sir Robert Walpole, who had vainly endeavoured to preserve peace, "but before long they will be wringing their hands."

We do not, however, hear much of the wringing of hands. War was generally popular, and on the whole, it must be confessed that England did well out of it. She acquired Canada and India, and if she lost America through her own inept stupidity, she had laid the solid foundations of a great empire. It was not till the end of the century that we hear



of discontent, and rioting. Then bread had risen to famine prices, and the impressment of men for the foreign wars, imposts and taxation had driven the starving mobs to desperation. In the earlier years the war was a matter for the soldiers. They acquired wounds and glory and sixpence a day and what could men want more?

War on English soil was a different matter. There were men alive in 1745 whose fathers had told them of "Oliver's Wars" and when the citizens of London heard that Prince Charles's army was marching on London, they were seized with panic.

Scotland and England might have been joined by the Act of Union, but Englishmen regarded the Scots, and particularly the Highlanders, as savage barbarians.

The King began to pack his trunks for Hanover, the Duke of Newcastle retired to bed, and the Dowager Lady Stafford wrote out cards inviting the wives of the Jacobite leaders to play at whisk.

The Guards, if we can credit Hogarth's plate, caroused along the way to Finchley, carrying the soldiers' usual impedimenta: wine and women.

If Prince Charles's counsels had prevailed, and his army had not turned back at Derby, what would have happened? It is an interesting question, and one which it is quite impossible to answer.

George II remained upon his throne, and his Government wrought a terrible vengeance upon the insurgents. The Jacobite Lords Cromarty, Kilmarnock and Balmerino were tried before their peers in London.

Lord Cromarty was pardoned; but the other two were executed on Tower Hill, the gallant Lord Balmerino exclaiming at the last "God save King James!"

In the following year that old fox Lord Lovat was executed; the heads of the Jacobite leaders hung over Temple Bar, and enterprising persons did a brisk trade in hiring out spy glasses to the passing sightseer.

In the same year that the Jacobite rising was put down,

William Pitt became a Minister of the Crown. He was too great a man, too warlike and energetic to serve for long under the lethargic Newcastle. The island of Minorca had fallen to the French, the mob of London clamoured for the death of Byng, whose cowardice, men declared, was responsible for the disaster. The Admiral was shot upon his own quarter deck, *pour encourager les autres*, and Newcastle was driven from office.

From the moment when Pitt took the reins into his own hands, till he fell dying in his place in the House of Lords, he was a great War Minister. Under him Robert Clive fought for England, and the few small factories and settlements of the East India Company became the vast territories of a potential empire.

In 1757, the year when the Battle of Plassy was fought, Pitt's attention was attracted by Colonel Wolfe, an officer serving gallantly in Canada against the French. In the following year he conquered Quebec and in time the whole of North America was, nominally, at least, in British possession.

"You would not know your country again," said Walpole, writing to Sir Thomas Mann. "You left it a private little island living upon its means. You would find it the capital of the world. St. James's Street crowded with nabobs and American chiefs, and Mr. Pitt attended in his Sabine farm by Eastern monarchs waiting till the gout has gone out of his foot for an audience. I shall be in town to-morrow, and perhaps able to wrap up and send you half a dozen French standards in my postscript."

Walpole was an acute observer of his country's campaigns and politics. He had noticed that Great Britain had now become an empire. Few people seem to have grasped the significance of this and the loss of the American colonies loomed far more in their estimation than the acquisition of other dominions.

That England lost the United States was no fault of Pitt. He was Prime Minister, but he was no longer the Great Commoner. He had entered the upper house as Lord

Chatham. His health was beginning to fail, and it was impossible to withstand such a coalition of pride, folly and incompetence as George III, Lord North and the faction which called itself "the King's Friends."

In vain did Chatham urge conciliation; the King and his party insisted upon the country's right to tax the colonies.

The Common Council and the Lord Mayor added their remonstrances to those of the Minister, and in 1778 when a public subscription was raised for the prosecution of the war, the City refused to contribute a penny. Unfortunately their efforts and example were unavailing.

A miserable war dragged itself to ignominious defeat, and General George Washington was elected President of the United States.

It was a dark hour for England. Chatham was dead. France, who was only waiting for an opportunity to avenge herself, had come to the aid of the American colonies. Spain and Holland declared war, and it seemed to decent London citizens, with the news of the defeat at Yorktown still ringing in their ears, that a civil war was breaking out in their capital.

Lord George Gordon, who was afflicted with a dangerous fanaticism, led a ravening mob of the lowest of the people, burning, pillaging and destroying wherever they went. The majority of these wretches would scarcely have known the cause of the riot, and it seems hardly credible in our day, that a dangerous madman could have raised a mob to destroy the city, because some very small concessions had been promised to the Roman Catholics.

The mob burnt the houses of the Catholics, destroyed their places of worship, killed all who resisted them, burnt Newgate prison, and freed its inmates, and proceeded to destroy the other prisons in the metropolis.

The Government hesitated to take extreme measures, but at last the distracted citizens saw the Guards marching to their relief. The sound of firing echoed through the streets, the mob fled to its hovels. Many were killed, others arrested and hanged.

The riot had been put down, and London looked like a city which had been burnt and sacked by a remorseless enemy.

The power of the mob, in the days when there were no police, was enormous.

In the Gordon Riots it had supported the cause of bigotry and intolerance ; in the case of John Wilkes and the Middlesex election it constituted itself the champion of freedom.

When Wilkes was sent to the King's Bench prison, the mob took the horses from his carriage and dragged it to the opposite end of the town, and it was probably the pressure of popular clamour as much as the grave petition and remonstrances of the Lord Mayor and the City Council that ultimately secured Wilkes his admission to the House of Commons.

The mob also objected to the change in the Calendar which was instituted in 1751, and went about the streets shouting : " Give us back our eleven days." In this they were not successful. Pope Gregory's Calendar was adopted and England put herself into line with the majority of European countries.

In 1782 William Pitt, the son of the great Chatham, became at the age of twenty-three Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Chatham had called himself a Whig, and his son was a Tory ; but the difference between the two parties was not so great as their frenzied partisans imagined. Pitt supported the King and his great rival Fox was the friend of the Prince of Wales.

The French Revolution, which was hailed by many in England as the fountain of liberty, economic justice and reform, was regarded by Pitt and the majority of his ministers with very different feelings.

Even before its excesses had driven moderate men to champion reactionary measures, Pitt had begun to fear its influence and to anticipate the setting up of a republic in England. That form of government has never had many adherents in our country ; but if a Minister at the close of the century had taken an impartial view of the condition of his country, he might well have feared that a revolution was

imminent. He would have seen wealth and rank entrenched among all the good things of life. Justice, if not denied to the poor, was at least difficult and often impossible for them to obtain, and the common people were sunk in poverty, vice and ignorance.

He would have acquiesced in the fact that Roman Catholics and Protestant Dissenters were debarred from civil and military preferment, and from the Universities, and that our penal code, and the methods of enforcing it were among the most barbarous in the world.

To those who began to talk of the march of progress and the perfectibility of mankind, the marked deterioration of life and morals as the century grew older must have come as an unpleasant surprise.

It may be they never noticed it and were quite unaware that the industrial revolution was taking its terrible toll of life and health and happiness, and that the wars into which they were wont to run so lightheartedly were draining away the life of the country.

The century closes in wars and miseries, the one thing to which our ancestors pointed with pride, the Union of England and Ireland in 1800, proving no cause for congratulation at all.

In spite, however, of terrible evils, of ignorance, vice and cruelty that we can hardly imagine, there was alight in England a torch of faith and goodness, and the love of mankind, and of freedom, which was to burn with a greater intensity in the next century.

Wesley and Whitefield had not laboured in vain to evangelise a heathen England; the Society of Friends was doing its beneficent work in its own quiet way; the influence of Rousseau and the French Encyclopædists, though slight, was not entirely negligible.

The duty to our neighbours which many men, lay and clerical, had preached and practised was at last to attract the attention of politicians and to emerge in the wider humanity and the hopeful reforms of the nineteenth century.

## LONDON'S ASPECTS AND CHARACTERISTICS

WHEN London, "the great wen," as Cobbett called it, "is spreading like a pestilence over the home counties," it may interest us to turn to a map of the town in the year 1770. This showed the "new buildings, the new roads, and late alterations by opening of the new streets and widening of others."

All the improvements and extensions, in fact, which made Smollett declare some years before that, if this mania for building continued, in a hundred years the whole county of Middlesex would be covered with brick.

"Rows of houses," says Horace Walpole, writing in 1776, "shoot out of every ray like a polypus; and so great is the rage for building everywhere, that if I stay here a fortnight, without going to town, I look about to see if no new house is built since I went last."

From no part of it could it take more than twenty minutes to walk into the country. The traveller who rode post into London or splashed through the muddy roads in the Oxford stage found the town beginning at the Tyburn turnpike. This, as everyone knows, was within a stone's throw of the Marble Arch. Should the traveller have come into London through the villages of Kensington and Knightsbridge, St. George's Hospital would have been the first house that could be called London, and that building stood among the fields.

The new road from Paddington to Islington, which we now call the Marylebone Road, connected a couple of villages, and from Islington the City Road, which was made in 1760, ran down to London between green hedges for the best part of a mile. The Foundling Hospital was built in Lamb's Conduit Fields, so that its inmates might enjoy pure country

air, and Queen's Square, Bloomsbury, had only three sides, thus giving its inhabitants an uninterrupted view of the hills of Hampstead and Highgate and the ancient forest of Middlesex.

New Bond Street and the roads and squares north of Piccadilly were built about the year 1721.

When Lord Burlington invited Handel to stay at his great London house, the composer chose rooms looking out at the back, as he liked the view of open fields.

Indeed, Lord Burlington had established himself at the end of the town because he was quite sure that no one would build beyond him.

Pennant tells us that in his boyhood Oxford Street "from Prince's Street eastwards as far as High Street was almost unbuilt upon the north side. I remember it," he continues, "a deep hollow road full of sloughs with here and there a ragged house, the lurking place of cut throats, insomuch that I never was taken that way by night in my hackney coach to a worthy uncle who gave me lodging at his house in George Street but I went in dread the whole way."

George Pryme, who was afterwards professor of political economy at Cambridge, tells us how, when he came to London, he kept his horse in Gray's Inn Lane because within half a mile of it on the north side were fields and rural rides.

"Portland Place," he says, "was bounded on the north by a wooden railing with a stile in the middle, beyond it were fields. At the other end (the south) was the Duke of Gloucester's house in a garden. . . . The present Regent Street was composed of several small streets. My mother went once or twice before she married to visit a cousin who had been domestic chaplain to George II, and had apartments in Kensington Palace, and she has told me that the road between Kensington and London was so dangerous at night that there was a horse patrol."

Bethnal Green and Stepney are marked as villages on our map. There were fine country houses with gardens in the Mile End Road, and the London Hospital had fields at the

back. The river bank was populous from Millbank, where the Tate Gallery now stands, to Shadwell.

South of the river, the Borough was a large town with 61,000 inhabitants, and along the river banks by Lambeth and Rotherhithe, there was a fringe of houses. Camberwell and Dulwich were in the open country. Brompton or Broomtown still grew thickets of gorse and broom until William Curtis, the author of *Flora Londonsis*, made a great garden there. Defoe's prophecy that "Great Russell Street is in a fair way to shake hands with Tottenham Court" was in a fair way to being fulfilled, for houses were creeping up the Tottenham Court road, and Charles Jenner in his *Town Eclogues* of 1772 lamented this encroachment of the town upon the country.

In vain alas shall City bards resort  
For pastoral images to Tottenham Court.

It was, however, purely a ribbon development and there were fields, woods and farms only a stone's throw from the Tottenham Turnpike and a pound at the Oxford Street corner.

Men still shot snipe in the marshes of Pimlico and on the five fields of Belgravia, and Bagnigge Wells with its gardens, harbours and rustic stream was in the valley of the Fleet.

At the beginning of the century the population of London was about three-quarters of a million. These numbers, however, included many outlying villages, such as Kensington, Hackney, Bow and Deptford and others as far away as Enfield and Uxbridge. Possibly half a million in 1700, and 750,000 by the end of the century would be more accurate figures. Even this lower computation suggests dreadful overcrowding, for it must be remembered that a large part of London was given up to open spaces. Setting aside Hyde Park which was not in the town at all, there was St. James's Park and the Green Park, and the gardens of the Inns of Court, which were far more spacious then than now. Furnival's Inn had a great garden behind it, and the houses of the nobility such as Craven House in Drury Lane, Powis House in Great Ormond Street,



and Newcastle House in Lincoln's Inn Fields all had their gardens. There were gardens in the City. Round about Fetter Lane and the Strand the citizens grew their flowers, and even figs and vines contended with the London fogs and soot, which as the century advanced grew thicker and more voluminous.

There were also the squares, most of which had been laid out in the eighteenth century, and Finsbury owned a cricket field where Kent had played All England in one of the few early matches that are reported.

It must be remembered that the city of London was almost entirely rebuilt after the fire, and that the greater part of what we now call the West End originated in the eighteenth century. At first it extended from Lincoln's Inn Fields to Park Lane, but gradually houses were erected on the other side of the Tyburn Road, and Cavendish Square and Portman Square with adjacent streets and terraces were built. City and West End were entirely distinct and separate. The West End was a collection of parishes, the chief inhabitants of which lived more than half the year in the country. The City was the home of merchants and business men, and had at the beginning of our period a very strong and active civil life. Some mediæval houses lingered here and there in the City; and many were allowed to decay and fall into ruins.

The genius for destruction which is so widespread in these days, flourished also in the eighteenth century. Several churches which had been allowed to become ruinous either fell down or were pulled down and the ancient wall and gates were destroyed. Among improvements it may be noted that the stagnant Fleet River was covered over from Holborn to Ludgate Hill.

In 1738 the first stone was laid of a new bridge over the Thames. Before the completion of the bridge at Westminster there had only been London Bridge to carry all the traffic across the river. The new bridge was built upon baulks of timber, which began to rot only too soon. Old London

Bridge was allowed to get into a ruinous condition and in 1757 the shops upon it were taken down. The old bridge must have been most picturesque, and the revenue which the city council derived from the shops was considerable.

In 1769 the bridge which we now call Blackfriars was opened. It was then known as Pitt Bridge, and a small toll was charged for its use.

The inhabitants of London were inordinately proud of their streets of new houses, all set in line, with large sash windows and roomy basements. Jerry building is, however, no new thing. It was flourishing in the eighteenth century. We hear of houses that were only one brick thick, and those bricks were made upon the spot, out of the clay which was dug from the foundations. "The first earth that comes to hand," we are told, "and only just warmed at the fire. . . . The inside of these buildings is as much neglected as the outside, small pieces of deal supply the place of beams, all the wainscoting is of deal, and the thinnest that can be found." <sup>1</sup>

The window tax, which had first been imposed in the previous century, was made more comprehensive. Every house which had upwards of seven windows had to pay this iniquitous tax, and in consequence most householders had as few windows as possible. In the country the cottages of the poor would be exempt, but in London the owners of tenement houses, which were already a pestilential nuisance, closed up as many windows as possible.

The old houses of the City with their gables and projecting storeys had mostly gone. They were certainly beautiful; but no one can deny that they were most insanitary. The new streets were wide and they were generally paved with cobbled stones, the walks had flat square stones, and were protected from the roadway by posts. A gutter ran down the centre of the street, crossed here and there by a raised causeway, and into this any liquid refuse from the houses was thrown.

The insanitary condition of London cannot be imagined or

<sup>1</sup> Grosley.

## NUISANCES

described. There was, of course, no drainage, and heaps of dust and filth occupied every open space within and without the City. Pigs browsed upon these dumps, and the refuse was occasionally sold to market gardeners and others. One great heap at the bottom of Gray's Inn Lane was not removed till the following century. It was then bought by Russia and removed to that country to be made into bricks for rebuilding Moscow.

Contemporary writers are loud in their condemnation of the dirt of the City.

"The filth, Sir, of some parts of the town," says Lord Tyrconnel, speaking in the House, "and the inequality and ruggedness of others cannot but, in the eyes of foreigners, disgrace our nation and incline them to imagine us a people, not only without delicacy but without Government—a herd of barbarians, or a colony of Hottentots . . . the streets of London, a city famous for wealth, commerce and plenty, and for every other kind of civility and politeness, but which abounds with such heaps of filth as a savage would look on with amazement."

Gwynn, who wrote an *Essay on Improvements* in 1750, gives a list of nuisances which should be removed.

1. Ordure left lying in the streets, and especially at the posterns of the City gates and on the north of the Royal Exchange.
2. Rubbish lying in the streets.
3. Open cellar doors or stone steps projecting into the streets.
4. Broken pavements.
5. Ruinous houses.
6. Sheds for shops, placed against the wall of churches.
7. Streets blocked up with sheds and stalls.
8. The encroachment of newly built houses into the street.
9. The driving of bullocks through the streets.
10. The prevalence of mad dogs.
11. The swarms of beggars.
12. The deluge of profanity in the streets.

## LONDON'S ASPECTS AND CHARACTERISTICS

13. The absence of lighting in the streets belonging to precincts such as St. Martin's le Grand, Cloth Fair, or St. Bartholomew the Great.

The eighteenth-century crowd could not hurry. It had to wind its way and see that it did not fall over projecting doorsteps, or tumble down open cellars ; care must be taken not to collide with the posts which protected the pavements or step into filthy puddles between the uneven cobbles. Then there were the penthouses, built out in front of the shops, with flowers in pots upon the top. They lent colour and beauty to the streets, but they covered the whole of the foot-way, and pedestrians had to walk in the road. The apple woman or the tart woman set up their stalls where they pleased, the bandbox man with a pole slung with bandboxes over his shoulder cluttered the narrow street, the bellows-mender and the chair-mender did their repairs on the pavement. Men and women hawked taffety tarts and brickdust, door-mats and watercresses, hot spiced gingerbreads, green hasted (early pears), crying their wares as they went. The bear ward, with his unhappy performing beast, came lumbering through the street. He would often stop at a street corner and give an entertainment, blocking the roadway and terrifying the horses. The puppet-show man too would come, and set up where he would collecting a crowd to witness a puppet play and the antics of Mr. Punch.

The lighting of the City, though much better than that of many other towns, was extremely primitive. From Michaelmas to Lady Day, every householder whose house fronted a street or alley was obliged to hang out a candle. This glimmering light lasted from six o'clock in the evening till eleven at night. After eleven the City was in total darkness and the order to illuminate only applied to moonless nights. Nothing was said about the many occasions when the moon might be obscured by clouds or fog.

In any case a guttering tallow candle enclosed in a horn lanthorn could give very little light. Robberies and violence increased, and it became obvious to everyone that there were

greater dangers in the streets of London than in the African jungle. In 1736 it was resolved that the Mayor and Corporation should take the matter of lighting into their own hands. A rate was levied on house-holders and the thousand or so miserable candles enclosed in horn lanthorns were replaced by 500 oil lamps. These lamps were lighted every night from sunset to sunrise. In Hogarth's picture, "Arrested for Debt" in *The Rake's Progress*, we see the lamplighter on his ladder pouring oil out of a large can into one of the very small burners of the street lamps. They might be an improvement upon the candles; they did not gutter or bend, or require snuffing; but the streets were still of a Cimmerian darkness, and it was necessary to hire linkboys to light coach or foot passengers on their way. There are still to be found in London old houses which have an extinguisher on the railing outside the front door, a relic of the days when footmen or linkboys put out their flambeaux as the door opened to admit a guest. Byrom tells us how he took a link at Blossom's Inn "to Gray's Inn for 2d., but I gave the boy a halfpenny more." No wonder the invention of gas lighting, though greeted at first with a howl of derision, was looked upon as the greatest improvement of the early nineteenth century.

In the matter of water London was fairly well provided. As early as the tenth century water had been brought to the town in pipes. In the eighteenth century it was laid on to all the better houses, and there was not a court or alley that did not have a pump or a standpipe. People would not always drink the water. They preferred their own old wells, if they had them, or would journey as far as Paul's Churchyard or to Aldgate pump, to drink out of the iron ladles which were provided for public use. They bought water from the old water carrier, who came round with two barrels slung from a yoke, crying "New river water."

How far the many fevers of the eighteenth century were due to bad water, we do not know. It is surprising what an amount of contaminated liquid can be swallowed with impunity if only indulged in regularly. In any case the

LONDON'S ASPECTS AND CHARACTERISTICS  
people of the eighteenth century were not great water drinkers.

During the first half of the century the streets presented a very picturesque appearance. Not only did the dress and equipages of the citizens lend a note of colour and gaiety to the scene ; but the painted signs which hung outside the shops filled the streets with colour and interest. In 1766 these signs were removed. Iconoclastic zeal which might have got rid of abuses, pulled down the spotted lions and civit cats, and set up plain numbers in their places. It was certainly more convenient, and the old signs had creaked and groaned in the wind, and occasionally fallen down on people's heads ; but the streets lost much of their glory. The inns, of course, kept their signs, of which we shall have something to say in another chapter, and shops, if they abolished their pictures, often had some emblem of their trade, the grocer's sugar loaf, or the golden arm holding a mallet, which denoted the goldsmith's trade. These could be purchased in Harp Alley near Shoe Lane.

We may remember that Swift's barber begged him to suggest a shop sign that would attract custom. The Dean produced the following notice to hang up in the window : " What do you think I'll shave you for 2*d*. and give you a drink." Customers poured in ; but they did not get a drink. Owing to the absence of stops, the notice could be read in two ways.

Addison had laughed at the absurdities of some of the signs such as the " Bell and Neat's Tongue," the " Dog and Grid-iron." It was usual, he tells us, " for a young tradesman, at his first setting up, to add to his own sign that of the master whom he had served," but Addison conjures him

" to make use of a sign which bears some affinity to the wares in which it deals. What can be more inconsistent," he says, " than to see a bawd at the sign of the Angel or a tailor at the Lion. A cook should not live at the Boot, nor a shoe-maker at the Roasted Pig."

With the map of eighteenth-century London is published a list of churches and public buildings. It comprises as many

as one hundred and three churches, nearly all of which were in the City. It mentions two hospitals, four prisons, and two theatres, the Blue Coat School in Newgate Street, Sion College, London Wall, Exeter Change, the South Sea House, Carlton House in Pall Mall, and Leicester House in Leicester Square. It includes Westminster Hall and the Monument ; but does not mention the Abbey or St. Paul's Cathedral or the Tower. Perhaps they are so plainly marked upon the map that further mention is thought unnecessary.

The British Museum originated in the purchase by the Government in 1753 of the collections and library of Sir Hans Sloane. These collections, which had cost their owner £50,000, were offered by him in his will to the country for £20,000. The Government promptly floated a lottery and the amount was raised in a few months. The collection, together with some Egyptian antiquities, the Harleian MSS. and the royal library which George II gave, were housed in the beautiful house, set among the fields, which had belonged to Lord Montagu. It is a great pity that this fine building should have been pulled down in 1845 to make way for the present structure.

The Museum was opened from nine in the morning till three in the afternoon, but entrance to it was hedged about with so many restrictions that it is not to be supposed that many would visit it.

"All persons," it was ordained, "wishing to see the Museum must make application to the porter giving their names, condition and residence with the day and hour when they desire to visit the house. The application must be made before nine in the morning or between four and eight in the evening. All applications to be made in a register and the tickets of admission should be issued by the principal librarian ; but not more than ten tickets for any one hour."

There were other tiresome regulations, and it is probable that a visit to the Museum was not often included in the London sights.

## LONDON'S ASPECTS AND CHARACTERISTICS

When William Hutton the historian of Birmingham came to town in 1784 he

“was unwilling to quit London without seeing what I had many years wished to see :

“And how,” he says, “I feasted upon my future felicity. I was not likely to forget Tuesday at eleven, December 7th 1784. We assembled on the spot, about ten in number, all strangers to me, perhaps to each other. We began to move pretty fast, when I asked with some surprise, whether there was none to inform us what the curiosities were as we went on? A tall genteel young man in person, who seemed to be our conductor, replied with some warmth, ‘What would you have me tell you everything in the Museum? How is it possible? Besides, are not the names written upon many of them?’ I was too much humbled by this reply to utter another word. The company seemed influenced; they made haste and were silent. No voice was heard but in whispers. The history and the object must go together, if one is wanting, the other is of little value. I considered myself in the midst of a rich entertainment, consisting of ten thousand rarities, but like Tantalus, I could not taste one. It grieved me to think how much I lost for want of a little information. In about thirty minutes we finished our silent journey through this princely mansion, which would well have taken thirty days. I went out much about as wise as I went in, but with this severe reflection, that for fear of losing my chance, I had that morning abruptly torn myself from three gentlemen, with whom I was engaged in an interesting conversation, had lost my breakfast, got wet to the skin, spent half a crown in coach hire, paid two shillings for a ticket, been hackneyed through the rooms with violence, had lost the little share of good humour I brought in, and came away quite disappointed.”

The country visitor would also be taken to see St. James's Palace. The state rooms were shown apparently every day to any well-dressed person. There he might see the fine tapestries made for Charles II which had been put away and forgotten, and were now unearthed, portraits of English sovereigns, and the drawing-room with the throne, where their Majesties held courts and levées.



## ST. JAMES'S PALACE

To St. James's Palace Hutton also went, and had no difficulty in this case in obtaining admission.

"The pleasure grounds," he says, "which form the park are extremely delightful, and well furnished with live stock." The beauty of the Park of St. James's is often commented upon by eighteenth-century writers.

"Surely this is a strange country," said George I after his coming from Hanover, "for the first morning after my arrival at St. James's, I looked out of the window and saw a park with walks and canal, and gardens which they told me were *mine*. The next day Lord Chetwynd the ranger of *my* park sent me a brace of carp out of *my* canal and I was told I must give five guineas to Lord Chetwynd's servant for bringing me *my own* carp out of *my own* canal in *my own* park."

Hutton proceeded to view the palace.

"In the first room I entered," he says, "were placed in order a great number of arms. 'I seem,' says I, 'to be arrived upon peaceable ground, for these arms appear out of use, by the dust upon them.'

"'They are cleaned, sir, once in two years.' 'Then I suppose the two years are nearly expired?' A smile was the answer. I passed through two or three other apartments, when a gentleman approached me. . . . 'Sir, it is not customary for any person to appear in the King's court with his hat on.' 'I beg pardon, sir; I was so attentive to the objects before me, I forgot I had one.'

"In the grand council room I was indulged like other children, with the chair of state. The chandeliers and girandoles were of silver; rather heavy and not very elegant; and though the furniture was rich, not too rich for a sovereign prince. In one of the apartments I was regaled, though a stranger, with a fricasse and a jelly. The good lady, while spreading the napkin on the table, which had twenty holes, uttered with half a smile and half a sigh, 'poor George.' The napkin, however, was clean, which is more than can be said of everything under that spacious roof. If some frugal housewife should ask why the holes were not mended, . . . she may be answered, people are not apt to *mend* at St. James's."

Had Hutton chanced to visit the palace some years previously

## LONDON'S ASPECTS AND CHARACTERISTICS

he might have seen King George and Queen Caroline dining in public, which they did every Sunday. It may be hoped that their table linen was in a better state.

Within a stone's throw of St. James's was the Queen's House or Buckingham House as it was often called. It had belonged to the Dukes of Buckingham, and in 1762 was purchased by the King. George III enlarged it and in 1775, when the Queen was turned out of her dower house, Somerset House which was being pulled down to make way for public offices, the King gave her Buckingham House. It was then known as the Queen's House and was a most beautiful building of early eighteenth-century red brick. On the northern front were inscribed the words "Rus in Urbe," and that it certainly had been in the Duke of Buckingham's time when there was open country to the north as far as Hampstead and an uninterrupted view down to the river. Queen Charlotte, finding the situation more rural and airy than that of St. James's Palace, retired there when the Prince of Wales was born, and she and the King lived in it when they were in London. George IV was responsible for the present edifice, which cannot in any way compare with its predecessor.

Leicester House, in Leicester Square, which was called by Pennant "the pouting places of Princes," had been occupied by George II when Prince of Wales. It was the tradition in the House of Brunswick for the heir to be on bad terms with his father. George's son Frederick also retired to Leicester House and held court there in opposition to the King. He was the Fred of whom we have the well-known lines :

Here lies Fred,  
Who was alive and is dead.  
Had it been his father,  
I had far rather.  
Had it been his sister,  
There's few that would have missed her.  
Had it been his mother,  
Far better than another.  
Had it been the whole generation,

## CARLTON HOUSE

'Twould have been a blessing for the nation.  
But as 'tis only Fred,  
Who was alive and is dead,  
There is no more to be said.

George IV when Prince of Wales kept up the amiable tradition; but he went and pouted elsewhere. Carlton House, on the site of Carlton House Terrace, was given to him by his father when he came of age, together with an income of £50,000 from the civil list, and a little matter of £60,000 with which to pay his debts. The house was adorned with fine pictures and statuary, and had a chair of state which cost £500, and there was also "an elegant bath completely lined with marble." The decorations were extremely florid and heavy, the conservatory was an amazing building, a sort of Gothic cathedral in glass and stone, but so dark that no flowers would do there. The gardens which extended to St. James's Park had been laid out by Kent. Carlton House was a plain, dignified building, and would be one of the things which a country cousin might be taken to gaze upon, together with Billingsgate Market, the Guildhall, and the King's Mews with its fine Doric columns, a little to the north of Charing Cross.

The Guildhall, which had been partly destroyed in the Great Fire, was restored in 1708. Here were kept the two giants, Gog and Magog. They were made of wicker work and pasteboard, and according to a history of them written in 1741 they

"had the honour to grace my Lord Mayor's Show, being carried in great triumph in the time of the pageants, and when that eminent annual service was over, remounted their old stations in Guildhall . . . till by reason of their very great age old time with the help of the city rats and mice had eaten up all their entrails."

The Houses of Parliament were of course the old buildings which were destroyed by fire about a hundred years ago. Wren had restored them and put up large galleries. From the pictures of them they seem to have been fine gloomy chambers,

fitted with uncomfortable benches, and lighted by wonderful gilt chandeliers of candles.

The walls were hung with the tapestries Elizabeth had had woven to commemorate the defeat of the Armada, and which also showed the little *Revenge* fighting gallantly against the Spanish ships.

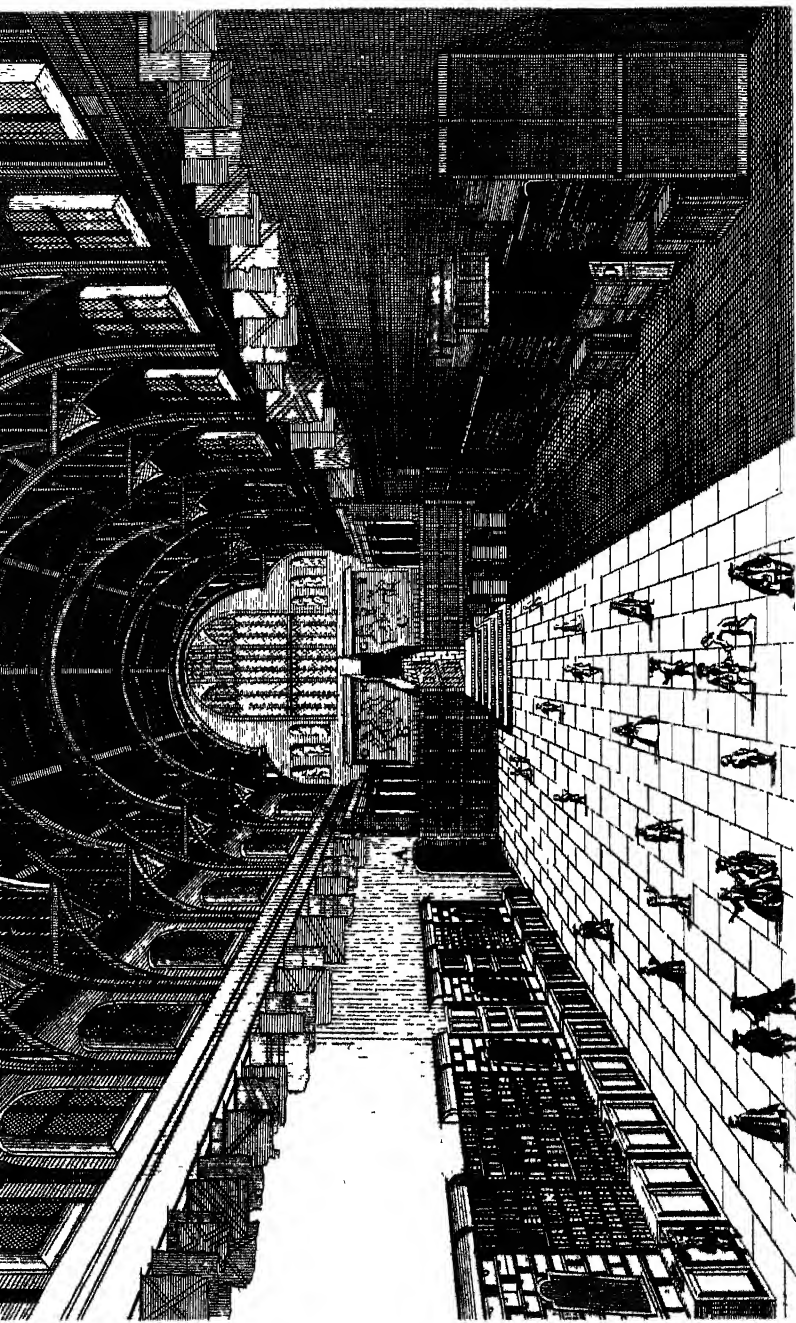
Westminster Hall, with its law courts, was another London sight. Men went there to listen to cases and appeals, and sometimes to do their shopping. A number of stalls were set out down the sides of the hall at which could be bought books and barristers' wigs, and serjeants' coifs and even women's clothes and household goods.

Wren was also responsible for considerable repairs to Westminster Abbey, which had fallen into a very bad state during the previous century. He designed the western towers, though they were not erected till after his death.

The Abbey was visited by very many who came to see the tombs and Henry VII's chapel, and the waxworks. Sir Roger de Coverley went there, we are told, and sat down in the Coronation chair. He was much interested in everything, particularly in the accounts given of "the Lord who had cut off the King of Morocco's head."

"Dr. Busby," he said, when shown that worthy's tomb, "a great man. He whipped my grandfather. A very great man." When he heard that the head of one of the kings, which was made of beaten silver, had been stolen a few years previously, "some Whig, I'll warrant you," says Sir Roger. "You ought to lock up your kings better, they will carry off the body too, if you don't take care."

Sir Roger's Whigs were not the only people who desecrated the Abbey. Zachary Pearce, Bishop of Bangor and Dean of Westminster, who was scholar enough to have edited Longinus, actually allowed Aylmer de Valance's monument to be removed to make way for that of Wolfe. Owing to the remonstrance of Horace Walpole it was put back somewhere near its original place; but the Dean excused himself by saying that he thought de Valance was a Knight Templar, "a very wicked set of



*A: Entrance to House of Commons B: The King's Bench  
C: Court of Chancery D: Court of Common Pleas*



## THE TOWER OF LONDON

people as his Lordship had heard, though he knew nothing of them, as they are not mentioned by Longinus."

"Ancient monuments," Walpole continues, "tumble upon one's head through their neglect, as one of them did, and killed a man at Lady Elizabeth Percy's funeral, and they erect new waxen dolls of Queen Elizabeth, etc., to draw visits and money from the mob."

In 1789 the *Gentleman's Magazine* published an indignant account of the condition of the Abbey font, which had been removed to make way for some monument and was lying derelict in a side room.

The ordinary tourist who visited the Abbey was apparently allowed to take away any little piece he fancied as a memento. "Children or childish age," says Pennant, "has greatly injured the beautiful shrine by picking out the mosaic, through the shameful connivance of the attendant vergers."

Another sight which was as popular in those days as it is in these was the Tower of London. The Tower, in the early years of the century, had been the arsenal from which the guns and powder had been shipped to the Continent to supply Marlborough's soldiers. The Mint was also established there, over which Sir Isaac Newton had presided as Master. In 1708 there had been, Strype tells us, lions in the Tower, and also "two leopards or tigers," the antiquarian was no zoologist, "three eagles, two owls, two cats of the mountains and a jackal. In spite of her miserable quarters she had lived to a good old age and had several litters of cubs."

Hutton also visited the Tower in 1749, but there again he found some difficulty in obtaining entrance "because Squire Blood stole the crown in the reign of Charles II."

"My Derbyshire accent," he tells us, "quickly brought the warders out of their lodge; who upon seeing the dust upon my shoes wisely concluded that money would not abound in my pocket, and with the violence of authority ordered me back."

Hutton succeeded, however, in seeing something of the armoury and the regalia.

"My conductor," he says, "led me to a door in an obscure corner and rang a bell. After waiting a short time, another door flew open and we entered a dismal hole resembling the cell of the condemned. Two wretched candles, just lighted up, adding to the gloom."

Outsidethe TowerHutton noticed a large quantity of cordage for shipping lying out exposed to the weather. "It is customary," the warder explained to him, "for cordage to remain here till rotten, when it is sold for a trifle, and then the place is supplied with more, which quickly follows the same way."

The Pouting Place of Princes was used to house for a time the Collections of Sir Ashton Lever, who had a wonderful museum of natural history specimens and other things of interest. Baron Dimsdale, who had seen museums in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Dresden and Paris, declared that the whole of these collections together could not be compared with the Leverian Museum. Unlike the British Museum, Sir Ashton Lever's collection was opened freely to anyone interested.

"To the disgrace of our Kingdom," says Pennant, after the first burst of wonder was over, "it became neglected; and when it was offered to the public by the chance of a guinea lottery, only 8,000 out of the 36,000 tickets were sold."

The man who won the collection transported it to the Surrey side of the river near Blackfriars Bridge, and with it were seen the various curiosities brought home by Captain Cook and other travellers. In 1778 the *Gentleman's Magazine* published a set of verses on the Leverian Museum, written by a child of ten.

If I had Virgil's judgment Homer's fire  
And could with equal rapture strike the lyre,  
Could drink as largely of the Muses' Spring  
Then would I of Sir Ashton's merits sing.  
Look here, look there, above beneath around  
Sure great Apollo consecrates the ground,  
Here stands a tiger mighty in his strength,  
There crocodiles extend their scaly length.  
Subtile, voracious to devour their food.  
Savage they look, and seem to pant for blood



## BRUTAL AMUSEMENTS

Here's shells and fish and finny dolphins seen  
Display their various colours blue and green.  
View there an urn which Roman ashes bore  
And habits once which foreign nations wore ;  
Birds and wild beasts from Afric's burning sand,  
And curious fossils rang'd in order stand.  
Now turn your eyes from them, and quick survey  
Stars, Diamonds crystals dark and golden ray,  
View apes in different attitudes appear,  
With horns of bucks, and goats and shamois deer.  
Next various kinds of monsters meet the eye,  
Dreadful they seem, grim looking as they lie.  
What man is he that does not view with awe  
The river horse that gives the Tigris law ?  
Dauntless he looks, and eager to engage  
Lashes his sides, and burns with steady rage.  
In here an elephant's broad bulk appears,  
And o'er his head his hollow trunk he rears.  
He seems to roar, impatient for the fight,  
And stands collected in his utmost might.  
Some I have sung, much more my Muse could name,  
A nobler Muse requires Sir Ashton's fame.  
I've gained my end and if you good sir, receive  
This feeble present, which I freely give,  
Your well-known worth to distant nations told  
Amongst the sons of fame shall be enrolled.

The eighteenth century was still in many respects a brutal age, though some factors were contributing to a softening of manners and an increasing humanity. In nothing is this brutality so much emphasised as in the sights which Londoners flocked to see, and even dragged their unfortunate children to gaze upon. Executions at Tyburn and outside Newgate prison were attended by all classes of the community as we shall describe in another chapter, and the prisons and lunatic asylums were regarded as places of entertainment, where the misery of the unhappy creatures confined there, afforded much mirth to the spectators. Such things seem to us incredible, but it may be that in the distant future the historian of the twentieth century may find much that is brutal, stultifying and very silly on the sports and amusements of the English people of to-day.

## MEANS OF COMMUNICATION

LONDON was not the immense metropolis that she is now, nor did men flock to her from all corners of the globe. A few foreigners came, and admired our Constitution, disliked the coarseness of our manners, and were pleased with the beauty of our women. In the country there were many men of means and education who had never been to London. Why should they take the trouble to journey in uncomfortable vehicles over bad roads, to be choked with fogs, deafened with street noises, and made ill by foul air and adulterated food? They stayed in the country and journeyed perhaps in the winter to the county town, which gave them theatres and libraries, shops and gaieties and the society of their own friends. To the uneducated countryman London might seem a city paved with gold; but more frequently and with greater reason he regarded it as a sink of iniquity into which it was dangerous to go.

The aristocracy came to London and inhabited some large house in Mayfair for three or four months during the year. Members of Parliament and their families were in town when Parliament was sitting, and a small army of place hunters and hangers-on accompanied them.

Business men made occasional journeys to London, bagmen rode in and out with their wares, judges and barristers set out upon circuit. How did all these people travel? And how did they move about this ever-growing city when they were domiciled there?

The noble lord who came up from the country to his house in St. James's Square rode in his coach and six. The Member of Parliament probably posted in his own carriage, changing horses at every stage. The business man went in the stage-

## STAGE-COACHES AND POSTING

coach or rode upon horseback. My Lord travelling in his own coach might seem the more splendid; but the heavy lumbering vehicle shook and jolted over the bad roads. It often stuck fast in the mud, and had to be pulled out by a team of cart-horses or a yoke of oxen. The gentlemen who posted in their own chariots or in hired chaises made a more expeditious journey. They often did as much as nine miles an hour. The post boy rode upon one of the pair of horses. The servants sat in the dickey behind, and the luggage was strapped on at the back. The charge for posting was 1*s.* 6*d.* a mile for a pair of horses. There was also a fee of 6*d.* to the ostler when the horses were changed, and the post boy received 3*d.* a mile. A duty of 1½*d.* a mile was charged on each horse, so that travelling post was not a cheap amusement. It was less expensive and perhaps more expeditious to ride.

John Byrom rode from Cambridge in nine hours. He calls it "a nimble passage," and adds that he did not stop to dine upon the way.

The stage-coaches of the early eighteenth century were heavy, lumbering vehicles, covered with dull black leather and studded with nails. The frames and the wheels of the windows were picked out in red, and the windows were often covered with leather curtains. The roof of the coach was rounded, and the only outside seat was over the boot. On this the coachman and guard sat together, the guard armed with a blunderbus and with his horn in his hand ready to blow a blast on passing town or village or on meeting another coach. At the back of these vehicles was a great basket, which took the parcels which the boot would not hold. Much luggage could not be carried by coach. Anything large and heavy was sent by the stage-waggon, or by water if this were practicable. In the lumber-rooms of old country houses may sometimes be found small leather trunks black and studded with nails, made to go into the boot of the coach, or to be strapped on to the back of post-chaises. The old coaches were generally drawn by three horses, on the foremost of which rode the postillion, clad in a green-and-gold laced coat and cocked hat.

These heavy vehicles did not average more than four miles an hour and twenty-five miles a day was as much as they could do. As late as 1765 the Bath coach which was advertised as being "hung on steel springs" took two days to do the journey to London, stopping the night at Andover.

As the roads improved, so did the coaches. They became larger and lighter, and were painted gay colours, yellow and green or claret and black. They did away with the postillion and had four fine powerful horses. Outside passengers were now taken who paid, of course, a much lower fare than the insides.

Not more than six were supposed to ride on the roof, but the number was often exceeded. *The Times* in 1791 had the following notice :

"In despite of continual and fatal accidents, not to mention the inferior consideration of pains and penalties, the stage-coaches still continue to carry extra numbers on the outside. There were eleven on the coach and box of the Gosport coach beside the driver and nine in the basket on Thursday last."

The following is the description of a coach starting from the yard of the Saracen's Head on Snow Hill.

"The coach, a handsome, well-built vehicle, stood on one side of the yard in all the brilliancy of a highly varnished claret ground. The four beautiful spirited animals belonging to it, with their glossy bright skins covered with cloths till the moment of 'putting to,' were then led forth by a fellow in corduroy breeches, lying in massive rolls on his large muscular limbs, and terminating in a pair of dull and never shining top-boots, a waistcoat which had been red plush, spotted with black ; but the glory of its gules and sable were wellnigh effaced by the long line of successive cross quarterings of grease and mud.

"Then the coachman appeared—well buttoned up to the throat in an enormous box coat of a whitish drab colour, fastened with immense mother-o'-pearl buttons, a yellow silk handkerchief round his neck, reaching just under the nether lip, and covering the tips of his ears, a hat with brims like the walls of Babylon and an air of affected nonchalance. . . . The



*The Inn Yard, from the picture by Hogarth*



luggage is then brought forth and loaded and all the passengers installed in their different places. The last directions are given. More last words, and a paper bag of biscuits is handed in at the coach window to the little boy who is going to — under the special care of the coachman, and as his Mamma delightedly observes is already become a favourite with the ‘kind-looking lady’ opposite to him. The small parcel to be left at Mr. K’s at ‘the small white cottage’ is snugly slipped into the coach pocket and the final ‘all right’ is given from the impatient passengers behind.”

In 1798, Mr. Richard Twining does ninety miles in seventeen hours, and remarks with complacency that his bill, including breakfast, dinner and tea, only comes to £4 9s. 6d.

When Telford and McAdam had done their work, and the roads in the south of England were the best in the world, the coach from London to Exeter accomplished the journey of one hundred and sixty-seven miles in sixteen hours.

We have quoted Mr. Twining’s bill, with which he was so pleased. Food at inns was not expensive, so that we may assume that most of the £4 9s. 6d. was spent on a coach ticket.

Travelling by the mail was very costly: 4d. a mile was charged in these vehicles, which, when we consider the value of money in those days, strikes us as very high. Stage-coaches and sometimes the night coaches were cheaper, but travelling in the eighteenth century was a costly as well as an uncomfortable proceeding.

In the Place MSS. there is an account by a contemporary of the starting and management of a coach which explains the high cost of travelling.

“A, B, C and D enter into a contract to horse a coach eighty miles, each proprietor having twenty miles, in which case he is said to cover both sides of the ground to and fro.

“At the expiration of twenty-eight days, a settlement takes place, and if the gross earnings of the coach should be £10 per mile, there will be £800 to divide between the four proprietors, after the following charges have been deducted—viz. tolls, duty to Government, mileage (or hire of the coach-makers), two coachmen’s wages, porters’ wages, rent or charge

## MEANS OF COMMUNICATION

of booking office at each end, and washing the coaches. These charges may amount to £150 which leaves £650 to keep eighty horses, and to pay the horse-keepers for a period of twenty-eight days, or nearly £160 to each proprietor for the expenses of his twenty horses, being £2 per week per horse. Thus it appears that a fast coach, properly appointed, cannot pay, unless its gross receipts amount to £10 per double mile, and even then the proprietors' profits depend on the luck he has in his stock."

Poor people, if they travelled at all, which was not usual, either walked or went in the stage-waggon. Even at the end of the century, when the roads were good, it took three weeks for a London parcel to reach Edinburgh if sent by the waggon.

Many people used the waggon, however, particularly for short distances. Women of the middle classes did not despise it if they were travelling without a male escort. It was safer than the coach. Highwaymen never stopped the waggon. With a Robin Hood-like gesture they said that they did not prey upon the poor. Perhaps they had found the poor not worth preying upon. The waggon was a long vehicle covered with a hood. It was drawn by a team of eight cart-horses, and the driver sauntered along at their head. It generally did about two miles an hour.

We hear of "a delightful ride in the ten-wheeled caravan from Greenwich to London," but even our ancestors, who were a hardy race, admitted the extreme discomfort of such a mode of travel.

Besides the vehicles we have enumerated, curricles, which were two-wheeled vehicles, with a pole and yoke, barouches, phaëtons, gigs, cabriolets, and at the close of the century, the landau, might have been seen in the London streets.

Goods, when practicable, were sent by sea, or by canal. The Margate hoy took passengers, and there were many ships which sailed from the port of London to towns on the south or east coasts of England.

The roads near London, though they were not so crowded as they are to-day, presented a sufficiently lively appearance.



## CROWDED ROADS AND TOLLS

In the City of London and the Borough, to say nothing of the rest of the town, more than a hundred inns sent out their stage-coaches, waggons and post-chaises every day. Fifty-three coaches left the White Horse Cellar in Piccadilly for the west of England.

Nineteen mail-coaches left London every night, and during the day numbers of stage-coaches, post-chaises, private carriages of every description, waggons, carts and riders upon horseback poured through the London turnpikes.

Droves of animals were brought into the city to be slaughtered at Smithfield, flocks of geese and turkeys came up from Norfolk, for the Londoners' table. They were driven all the way, sleeping in the corn fields, and picking up what grain they could. Their feet were tarred to preserve them from the stony roads. These roads, even near the metropolis, were, in the early years of the century, almost incredibly bad. Turnpikes, which were generally farmed out to the highest bidder, who made as much out of them as he could, were gradually set up all over England. They were no new thing, toll having been charged on English roads in 1267. A great effort was made, however, in the eighteenth century to improve the roads. They were taken out of the hands of the parish, whose attempts to keep them in repair had been deplorable.

Every road into London had its turnpike, and it was impossible to enter or leave the town without paying toll. Only the pedestrian was exempt. The rider on horseback paid  $1\frac{1}{2}d.$  at each gate.

A cart or carriage with one horse paid  $4\frac{1}{2}d.$ , a vehicle drawn by four horses paid  $1s. 6d.$  Cattle, sheep and pigs were charged by the score.

It was said that each coach contributed £7 a year in tolls for every mile of the road it traversed. If all the money thus collected had been spent upon the roads, they should have been superb.

The tax was an irritating one, and the pikeman was not a popular member of society. It was said that he was often in league with the highwaymen, reporting to them any prospec-

tive victims, and when he could bully the timid or the poor, he would often exact much more than his legal toll.

On lonely country roads the pikeman had a very quiet life; but the London turnpikes were busy night and day.

"There is a difference," says a contemporary writer, "between a Tyburn Gate official, and a promiscuous sojourner who guards a new lone road, through which scarcely a roadster trots.

"The Cockney keepers of Cockney riders is rarely without 'short cut' and the ready in word and deed. In his short pocketed white apron he stands defiant and seems to say: 'who cares?' His knowing wink to the elastic arm of the coachee, which indicates the 'all right,' has much meaning to it. His twirl of the sixpence on his thumb-nail, and rattle of coppers for small change, prove his knowledge of exchange and the world."

It was claimed that the turnpike trusts had effected an enormous improvement in the roads. Arthur Young, however, and other travellers said many bitter things about the turnpike roads. That they were improved towards the end of the century, particularly in the neighbourhood of London, cannot be denied. Foreign travellers spoke with enthusiasm of the English roads near the metropolis, and Catherine Hutton noted a great improvement and said that a statue ought to be erected to McAdam.

"The man who mends roads," she adds, "confers a greater benefit on mankind than the general who slaughters thousands or the sovereign who governs millions for his own gratification."

Of the number of stage-coaches which poured through the London turnpikes a large proportion were short-distance coaches, which went to such outlying villages as Kensington or Paddington, Hampstead or Islington; others went farther afield to Brentford or Bow, to Finchley or Dulwich, to Barnet or Staines. These coaches were the precursors of the omnibus.

## HACKNEY COACHES AND SEDANS

Many people lived in the villages round London, and came in every day on foot or on horseback, by the stage or in a private carriage. Friends would make up parties for their mutual protection, when they rode into London. The roads outside the turnpikes were very dangerous. The Kensington road was infested with footpads, and the Hampstead road was even worse.

Nor were highwaymen the only danger. The roads were so bad that coaches frequently overturned, and there is a story of a lion, escaped from a menagerie, attacking the Exeter mail and eating up the guard.

The Londoner who had occasion to drive from one part of the town to another could hire a hackney coach.

The hackney coach had been introduced into London in the seventeenth century. It was abused by the tradesmen, who declared that the people in the hack coaches could not look in at shop windows, and also escaped some of the importunities of the apprentices who waylaid the pedestrian, and pushed their masters' wares. They complained too of the noise made by those vehicles on the cobbled streets and said that they could not let their upper rooms to Members of Parliament and others which they had done hitherto.

The hackney coaches had, however, come to stay and in 1771 there were a thousand of them on the streets of London. The number allowed to ply for hire was regulated by law. At first they were very heavy noisy vehicles, with perforated iron shutters over the windows, through which the passengers could look without being seen. Later on the shutters were removed and the windows glazed, and the carriage was sometimes referred to as a glass coach.

As the hackney coaches increased, the Sedan chairs which had been introduced into England from France in the seventeenth century, began to decline. They had been very popular. The passenger in a Sedan chair could be set down at the very door, or even carried inside the house, and so avoid wind and weather and the mud of the streets. They had been much used by ladies, going to routs or card parties. Social London

## MEANS OF COMMUNICATION

was then a small place, and the distances were not great. The motion was comfortable if the bearers kept in step, but if they did not the jolting became almost intolerable. They had also been known to set a fare down in the middle of the street and demand double payment before they would take her up again.

There were various stands for hackney coaches and for Sedan chairs in London, and they seem to have been much used. There were lines of chairs round the Piazza of Covent Garden every evening.

Besides the hackney coaches and the Sedan chair, there was another mode of locomotion, which is now at last being revived. The river was still the great highway of London, and it was possible to hire a waterman and be rowed from the Temple stairs to Rotherhithe, or from Lambeth to the village of Chelsea. This method of transportation was not so popular as it had been in the days of Mr. Pepys, but still those persons who lived near the river and wanted to go to some other place in its vicinity would generally hire a boat and a waterman rather than a hackney coach.

The river, of course, was not embanked, and its waters at high tide came up to the walls of Somerset House and to the Temple Gardens, and washed the confines of many a house and garden in the city and its environs. At low tide there were banks of evil-smelling mud ; but in spite of the mass of offal and sewage which was discharged into the Thames, the water was pure enough for the salmon to swim up to the higher reaches, and for the citizens to disport themselves in its waters.

Addison tells us how he took boat from Richmond at four o'clock in the morning and fell in with a fleet of gardeners bound for the several market ports of London. He landed "with ten sail of apricock boats at Strand bridge, after having put in at Nine Elms and taken in melons."

Horace Walpole tells us how he saw the company going to the Duke of Cumberland's ball, "get into their barges at Whitehall stairs, as I was going

## THE POST OFFICE

myself, and just then passed by two city companies in their great barges, who had been a-swan hopping.<sup>1</sup> They laid by and played 'God save our noble King,' and altogether it was a mighty pretty show."

The bishops used to go every night from their palaces in the Strand, Southwark or Lambeth to the House of Lords in state barges rowed by their own watermen in liveries of blue and white.

It must have been a fine water pageant and Londoners doubtless regretted its discontinuance, when the building of Westminster Bridge made it easier for their Lordships to go to and fro in their coaches.

The General Post Office was established at Brydges Street, Covent Garden. At the beginning of the century it was possible to boast that "in five days an answer to a letter may be had from a place 300 miles distant from the writer."

This was certainly very wonderful; but it must be confessed that the letters did not always arrive. They were carried by post boys upon horseback, subject to the evil state of the roads, snow and floods and the attentions of highwaymen. Until 1720 all letters had to go to London and be there despatched to their various destinations. It was Ralph Allen of Bath who suggested that this was a waste of time and money, and finally, after much agitation, started cross posts. When he died in 1764, he was making an income of £10,000 a year for himself out of the posts. The Government then took them over.

Another inhabitant of that beautiful city was John Palmer, who was the founder of the mail-coach. The first of these coaches started from London in April 1784 and did the journey to Bristol in fifteen hours. By the end of the century pace had been much accelerated and from many towns within a radius of a hundred miles of London, a letter could be received almost as quickly as in these days.

<sup>1</sup> Swan-hopping was a corruption of swan-apping, or marking the swans on the Thames. Many belonged to City companies.

## MEANS OF COMMUNICATION

The following is a notice issued by the G.P.O. in 1784.

“His Majesty’s Post Master General, being inclined to make an experiment for the more expeditious conveyance of the Mails of Letters by Stage Coaches, Machines, etc., has been pleased to order that a trial shall be made upon the road between London and Bristol, to commence at each place on Monday the 2nd of August next, and that the Mail should be made up at this Office every evening (Sundays excepted) at seven o’clock and at Bristol, in return at three o’clock in the afternoon (Saturdays excepted) to contain the Bags for the following Post Towns and their Districts, viz :

Hounslow, between 9 and 10 at night from London. Between 6 and 7 in the morning from Bristol . . . [here follow names of other Post Towns and times].

Marlborough—about 6 in the morning from London. About 7 o’clock in the evening from Bristol. . . .

Bath—between 10 and 11 in the morning from London. Between 5 and 6 in the afternoon from Bristol.

Bristol. About 12 noon from London.”

The notice also stated that letters for this service could be “put into any receiving house in London before six in the evening or before seven at this Office” (G.P.O.).

“Incoming letters,” the notice continued, “will be sorted, and delivered as soon as possible after their arrival in London, and are not to wait for the general delivery.”

The concluding paragraph solemnly warns “carriers, coachmen, higglers, news carriers and all other persons” of the penalties for conveying letters to the prejudice of the Revenue.

The *Morning Post* was quick to realise the importance of the mail-coach scheme. Here is its comment published on August 2, 1784, the day the venture started :

“The new arrangements respecting the carriage of the mail on the Bath road, will, in all probability, be answered in both parts. The diligence, conducted with the spirit and authority of a great Government concern, will have such advantages over all competitors on the road as will secure it the consistent support of passengers—and from thence will obtain the more

## COST OF POSTAGE. FRANKS

important benefit to the public of the post office bags being carried for nothing. Mail robberies will also be less frequent.”

Letters were charged according to the distance carried, and whether one or more sheets were enclosed. Thus a letter from London to Edinburgh at the end of the century cost 1s. 1½d. single, 2s. 3d. double, and as much as 3s. 4½d. for three sheets. The smallest scrap of paper was counted as a sheet, and as envelopes were unknown, and the sheet was merely folded and sealed, the post office could discover what the letter contained.

There was, of course, no parcel post, and no money orders. Parcels were sent by coach or waggon and money by cheques or notes, or more usually by messenger. Sometimes a gold quarter guinea, or even half a guinea, was put under the seal of a letter, and many a schoolboy as he broke the wax, found that his mother or godfather or maiden aunt had slipped a half-guinea under the seal.

One reason for the high cost of letters was the system of franking. Members of both Houses of Parliament were allowed to send all letters free if their signatures were upon the cover. This led to an enormous trade in franks.

Men signed dozens of sheets, and either sold them or allowed their servants to sell them. Everyone who knew an M.P. might pester him for franks. It was reckoned that in 1763 franked letters to the value of £170,000 passed through the post.

At the end of the seventeenth century a penny post had been established for all letters posted to London addresses, and to some suburban villages. Special messengers carried these letters

“to and from all parts, at seasonable times of the cities of London and Westminster, Southwark, Redriff, Wapping, Ratcliff, Lymehouse, Stepney, Poplar, Blackwall, and all other places within the weekly Bills of Mortality, as also to the four towns of Hackney, Islington, South Newington Butts and Lambeth; but to no other towns, and the letters to be left only at the receiving houses of those four towns;

but if brought home to their houses, a penny more in those towns ; nor any letter to be delivered to them in the street ; but at the receiving houses. They now do use stamps to mark the hour of the day on all letters when sent out from their office, to be delivered, by which all persons are to expect their letters within one hour, little more or less, from the times marked thereon, excepting such letters as are to be conveyed to the out towns and remotest parts, which will be longer."

This seems wonderful and beats our present postal arrangements entirely. It must be remembered, however, that things in the eighteenth century were apt to look very well upon paper. In practice they deteriorated. Complaints about the London penny and twopenny posts and the carriage of mails to the country were not unknown.

"The Bath Mail," says the *Morning Post* in 1772, before the days of Palmer certainty, "did not arrive so soon by several hours on Monday, owing to the mail man getting a little intoxicated on his way between Newbury and Marlborough, and falling from his horse into a hedge where he was found asleep by means of his dog."

At the end of the century, a staff of 105 clerks and 137 letter carriers were employed at the General Post Office, and a letter from Bath would reach London on the following day, weather, Bacchus and highwaymen permitting. It was an achievement of which Palmer may well have been proud.

By this time the General Post Office was established in Lombard Street, and in the evening when the mails were going out, it was a place of great bustle. A writer who could remember it thus describes the scene :

"Hark, hark the hour ! The mail-guards are the soloists, and very pleasant music they discourse, not a few of them are first-rate performers. A long train of gaily got up coaches remarkable for their light weight, horsed by splendid-looking animals, impatient of the curb and eager to commence their journey. Stout gents in heavy coats, buttoned to the throat, ensconce themselves in reserved seats. Commercial men contest the right of a seat with the guard or coachman. Some



## THE MAIL COACH STARTS

careful mother helps her pale and timid daughter up the steps, —a fat old lady already occupies two-thirds of the seat—what will be done? Bags of epistles innumerable stuff the boots, formidable bales of the daily journals are trampled small by the guard's heels. The clock will strike in less than five minutes, the clamour deepens, and the hubbub seems increasing; but ere the last sixty seconds expires, a sharp winding of warning bugles begins. Coachie flourishes his whip, greys and chestnuts prepare for a run, the reins move but very gently, there is a parting crack of the whip-cord and the brilliant cavalcade is gone."

In this manner until the mail train supplanted the mail-coach were the letters despatched from the General Post Office.

## THE LIFE OF THE UPPER CLASSES

THE memoirs, journals and letters of the eighteenth century deal, very largely, with what we may call, for lack of a more appropriate title, the upper classes. They were not very numerous but they made a great stir in the world. At the accession of George III, there were only 174 British peers, twelve of whom, being Roman Catholics, could not sit in the House of Lords. On them and on their relatives and connections, devolved the task of governing the country. Many of these men led a life of empty frivolity, others were frankly disreputable; but among them there were some who used their undoubted gifts in the service of their country, and a few who were great patriots. They had been brought up to the business of governing, and without them it might have been difficult to get men, with sufficient talent and experience, to serve in the Cabinet, or to fill diplomatic posts. Even Horace Walpole, who gave most of his day to society and the arts, put in a certain amount of time in the House of Commons.

"I had been," he says, "at the Duke of Cumberland's levy, then at the Princess Amelia's drawing-room, from thence to a crowded House of Commons, to dine at your brothers, to the Opera, to Madam Ceilian's, to Arthur's and to supper at Mrs. George Pitt's."

He seems to have spent a fairly crowded day.

Eighteenth-century literature is full of diatribes against the idle, spendthrift rich. They were generally written by middle-class people and must be accepted with a certain amount of reserve. There was then, as there is now, a small class of senseless people who lived for nothing but pleasure and amusement. Their doings were chronicled and have come

down to us, and we are inclined to think that every rich man was inherently idle and vicious. Still, when we have discounted the exaggerations of moralists and of class prejudice, we must admit that the man of rank and fashion was very often both useless and profligate.

“It is a gaudy thoughtless age,” says Richard Cumberland, “and they who live up to the fashion of it, live in a continual display of scenery, their pleasures are all pantomimes, their dinners steam along the columns of every daily paper, and their suppers and assemblies dazzle the guests with tawdry lights and suffocate them with suspicious odours.”

In other and more modern language, this might be a description of some of the society of the present day.

The man of rank had often been spoiled from his cradle. His parents were far too busy amusing themselves to give much time or thought to his upbringing. He was left to servants, who occasionally neglected him, it is true, but more often spoiled and flattered him. The public schools, to which the nobility were sometimes sent, did not certainly spoil or flatter; indeed, it is pitiful to think of the indulged and cosseted son of a luxurious house being thrown into the hardships and brutalities of a great school. The boy probably returned home with a fair knowledge of the classics—it was fashionable to know something of Terence and Horace, even in the House of Lords they were often quoted—and he had probably been thoroughly grounded in vice and debauchery. He sometimes went from school to the University, where as a nobleman's son he would have special privileges. He wore a cap with a gold tassel or tuft, and was much run after by assiduous youths who were known as tuft hunters. If he did not go to the University, he perhaps made the Grand Tour with a bear leader. This was often another opportunity for foolish indulgence; but there were youths who profited by their sojourn abroad and began to form a taste in art, to which we as a nation are still indebted. Foreign travel, indeed, increased so much during the eighteenth century that French hotels found it worth their while to advertise in the London newspapers. In spite of

## THE LIFE OF THE UPPER CLASSES

frequent warfare, there was much communication between the English aristocracy and the French *noblesse*. A young nobleman might be given valuable introduction to friends in Paris, and there perhaps he would learn, if he were intelligent, the existence of other things besides sport and pleasure. Frequently he came home with pictures and statuary from Italy which adorned his country home or his town mansion. The collections made by many noblemen were of great value and beauty. Often, it is true, their zeal outran their knowledge and careful copies were planted upon them. Sometimes they spent more upon works of art and upon the improvement of their houses than they could reasonably afford.

For what has Virro painted, built and planted?  
Only to show how many tastes he wanted  
What brought Sir Visto's ill-got wealth to waste  
Some demon whispered "Visto have a taste."

Foreigners were usually polite to an English milord, and bear leaders were proverbially flattering. The young man came back from a tour abroad having lost very little of his good opinion of himself. He did not, as a rule, settle in London. He had his country place or places, which were really his home, and he came to London for the season. Some men like Coke of Holkham devoted their lives and energies to the soil, others like Turnip Townshend shook the dust of office off their feet and retired into the country to consider the rotation of crops and the things which really matter. With a few exceptions the country life with its sports and activities still interested them. If they were great men in London they were potentates in the country. The line of demarkation between the lord and the commoner fills our democratic minds with amazement. There were noblemen who kept their little courts and had gentlemen ushers and ladies-in-waiting as though they were royal. They were quite sure that they were in every way superior to the common man. Some of them could hardly be persuaded that all men were equal in the sight of God.

"I thank your ladyship," said the Duchess of Buckingham writing to Lady Huntingdon, "for the information concerning the Methodist creatures. Their doctrines are most repulsive, and strongly tinged with impertinence and disrespect towards their superiors, in perpetually endeavouring to level all ranks and do away with all distinctions. It is monstrous to be told you have a heart as sinful as the common wretches that crawl the earth, and I cannot but wonder that your ladyship should relish any sentiments so much at variance with high rank and good breeding."

The clergyman who preached a funeral sermon on the Duchess of Queensberry would have agreed with these sentiments. "Dry up your tears, my brethren," he exclaimed, "weep no more for this most illustrious princess, who, though she was a great and good duchess on earth, is now a great and good duchess in Heaven." Surrounded with such absurd flattery it is not surprising that the young nobleman began to think himself a very superior creature. He lived in one of the fine houses, which have almost ceased to exist in London. Strype, writing in 1720, speaks of Great Russell Street as a fashionable quarter.

"It was," he says, "a very spacious and handsome street, inhabited by the nobility and gentry especially on the north side. In its passage it saluteth Southampton House, Montagu House and Thanet House, all these the seats of noblemen."

As the century advanced the tide of fashion swept westward, and towards the end of our period the upper classes had very largely established themselves in Mayfair.

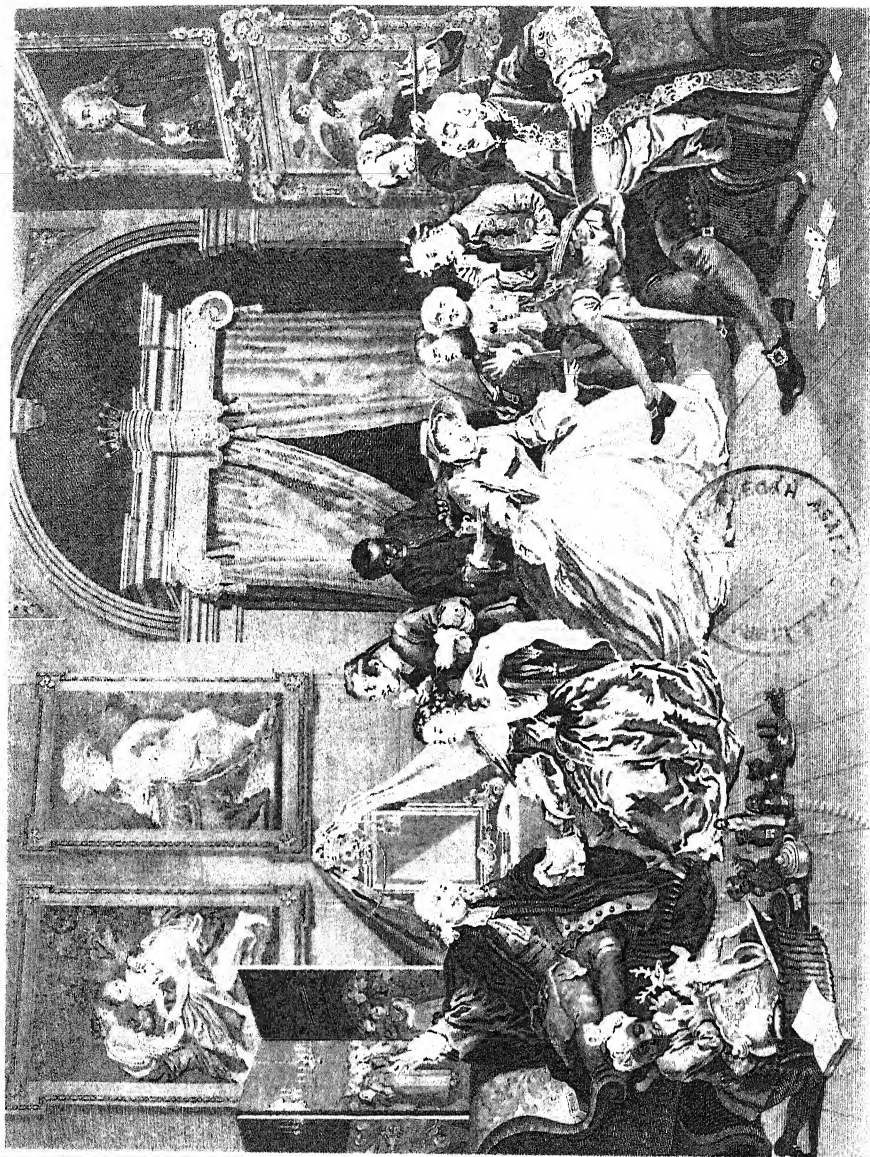
The finest furniture and the most costly pictures, books and porcelain were generally reserved for my lord's country house or houses. In these palatial residences there was more room to exhibit statuary and other works of art and to form a fine library. Still, many of the great London houses were museums of beautiful things. Not only did rich men bring home spoils from the continent, but many of them continued to collect. In the *Spectator* we read how the Lady Leonora collected china and had "one of the prettiest grotesque works that

ever I saw, made up of scaramouches, lions, monkeys, mandarins, trees, shells, and a thousand other odd figures in china ware."

My lord did not usually rise before eleven in the morning ; then he drank a cup of chocolate, and was waited upon by his valet and his barber. His levée was an elaborate affair, attended by his relations and such friends as were not sufficiently exalted to have levées of their own. There would come the needy place hunter, the poet or author who wanted a patron, the friend who hoped to borrow money. "Lord !" said George Selwyn, when he went to the sale of Mr. Pelham's silver, "how many toads have eaten off these plates !" Many of these slimy creatures came to a great man's levée with a faint hope of being asked to dinner.

In his *Rake's Progress*, Hogarth depicts a levée. The young man of fashion, with his foolish empty face, stands among a crowd of parasites. There is the dancing master, the French fencing master, the English teacher of quarterstaff. A man in a full-bottomed wig sits playing at a harpsichord, a depressed gentleman, with a plan in his hand, is a garden improver—the sort of Capability Brown, who impoverished so many country gentlemen and ruined so many fine gardens.<sup>1</sup> J. Rakeswell Esquire is a patron of sport, his walls are hung with portraits of cocks, and a kneeling jockey is presenting a piece of plate which one of his horses has won. In an ante-room is a crowd of tailors, wigmakers, and various other tradesmen. There is, even, in the foreground of the picture, with his baleful eye fixed upon the hero, a bravo with a letter of introduction and his sword for hire. The hero of this picture has not yet elbowed his way into good society. The visitors, at his levée, are tradesmen and fencing masters. If we wish to look at a picture of a really fashionable affair we must turn to Hogarth's "Marriage à la Mode." Here we see the Countess sitting at her toilet table, her hair being

<sup>1</sup> As was so often the case in Hogarth's pictures, the figures are many of them portraits. The gardener is Bridgman, the fencing master Luke Dubois, the teacher of quarterstaff the redoubtable Figg.



*Marriage à la mode, from the picture by Hogarth*





curled and dressed. She is surrounded by a well-dressed company. Some of them are drinking the chocolate, which is handed by a negro servant. One or two are listening to music, which is being played by a hired musician. A man in the robes of a barrister, who is the Countess's paramour, lolls upon a sofa. One of the guests has his hair in curl papers, another turns the pages of a book with an air of extreme boredom. The country squire, with a whip in his hand, has fallen asleep. A little black boy has brought some china ornaments and other objects of art, which lie unregarded upon the floor. Under the painting of Jupiter and Leda, on a porcelain dish, is the title "Julio Romano." This plate of Hogarth, though touched with his usual satire, is less gross and brutal than many, and it strikes us not as a caricature, but as a true picture of life, as it was sometimes lived among the idle rich.

The man, who was not sufficiently wealthy or distinguished to hold a levée of his own, set out to attend the levées of greater men. Having had himself dressed, painted, powdered and scented, his hair arranged in the latest fashion, he went down with his fan or his muff or his nosegay, whichever might be the fashionable adjunct, to the Sedan chair which was awaiting him.

"We rise by nine," says John Macky, in his *Journey through England*, "and those that frequent great men's levées find entertainment at them till eleven. About twelve, the *beau monde* assembles in several coffee or chocolate houses. We are carried to these places in chairs or Sedans. If it is fine weather, we take a turn in the Park till two, when we go to dinner. The general way is to make a party at the coffee house to go and dine at the tavern, where we sit till six, when we go to the play, unless you are invited to the table of some great man. After the play, the best company generally go to Tom's or Will's coffee houses near adjoining, where there is playing picket and the best of conversation till midnight."

It is to be remembered that this conversation could be very good indeed. The beau, the fop and the macaroni, as the

## THE LIFE OF THE UPPER CLASSES

foolish young men of fashion were called, might live for nothing but amusement, but there were other men of rank, who cared very much for what was artistic and intellectual. They would sit in a coffee house for hours, listening to Johnson or Burke, they would make a friend of a poet, even if he were a scrivener's son, and be glad of an invitation to Queen's Square to listen to Dr. Burney playing upon the harpsichord.

If a man had the taste and means for amusements, they were provided for him without stint. There were the theatres, the pleasure gardens, the masquerades and ridottos, the gambling hells and the clubs. There were cock-fights and prize-fights and dog-fights. We shall describe some of these in other chapters.

The craze for gambling was widespread in the eighteenth century. All classes indulged in it. In the upper ranks, card playing was often the chief occupation of the day. Many and varied were the games which, were played. There were whisk and picket, which, differently spelt, are with us still, hazard and pharaoh or faro, ombre, loo, quadrille, pope joan, bassett, passage, commerce, costly colours, Queen Nazareau, post and pair. Miss Burney played a harmless game called "Mysow's pigged," which, in more delicate Victorian times, was renamed "My bird sings." Then there was "Geographical goose," or "Watch it and catch it," which Miss Talbot played with a little friend. There was also the Mississippi table, a kind of bagatelle. Lady Louisa Stuart tells us that it "helped off some tedious moments on a rainy day."

Most people, however, wanted something more exciting.

"The girls and boys," says Lady Hertford, writing to her friend, Lady Pomfret, "sit down as gravely to whist tables as the Fellows of colleges used to do formerly. It is actually a ridiculous, though I think a mortifying sight, that playing should become the business of the nation, from the age of fifteen to four-score."

Faro was introduced into this country from France, and the name was originally spelt pharaoh from the picture of the

Egyptian king upon one of the cards. As much as £180,000 had been lost at hazard at the Cocoa Tree. There were many cases in which men were faced with complete ruin after a run of ill-luck.

"I tremble to think," says George Lyttelton, writing to Dr. Doddridge, "that the rattling of a dice box at White's may one day or other (if my son should be a member of that noble academy) shake down all our fine oaks. It is dreadful to see, not only there, but in almost every house in town, what devastations are made by that destructive fury the spirit of play."

He may well have trembled. Even in that profligate society, his son was to be known as the wicked Lord Lyttelton.

"It was in this country," says Lady Holland in her journal, "that a man first dared to deal at faro without a mask, so infamous did they deem that office upon the continent." In 1797, Lord Chief Justice Kenyon declared, that if anyone were convicted before him for a gambling offence, they should, even if they were the first ladies in the land, "exhibit themselves in the pillory." He was alluding to Lady Buckinghamshire, Lady Elizabeth Luttrell, Lady Archer, and Lady Mount Edgcumbe, who were generally known as Pharaoh's daughters. They were each convicted of keeping a gaming table, but they were let off with a fine, nothing more being heard about the pillory.<sup>1</sup> There were others who, like these ladies, were successful gamesters. We are not alluding to sharpers or to the persuasive gentlemen who go about playing the three-card trick. There was Mr. Thynne, who gambled at Almack's and who retired from play in disgust because he had only won twelve thousand guineas in two months.

Women were often inveterate gamblers, and were not always too scrupulous about paying their debts. Lady Glendore was known as "Owing Glendore" (Owen Glendower) because she continually owed money which she never paid.

<sup>1</sup> The Gaming Act of 1738 had made pharaoh, hazard and various other games of chance illegal.

Lord Chesterfield, that astute old worldling, knew all about the evils of gaming. He added a codicil to his will, that if his heir should lose as much as £100 at play he was to forfeit £5,000, and if he was ever seen at Newmarket, another £5,000 would be the penalty.

There were, of course, men and women of sense, who thoroughly disliked this perpetual gambling. Mrs. Carter, the learned translator of Epictetus, complained bitterly about a card party, into which she had been inveigled.

“For the punishment of my iniquities,” she writes, “I was once drawn into a—what shall I call it?—a drum, a rout, a racket, a hurricane, an uproar, a something in short, that was the utter confusion of all sense and meaning, where every charm in conversation was drove away by that foe to human society whisk—in a word, where I was kept up, muzzing and half dead with sleep and vexation till one in the morning; and from that time made a resolution, in whatever company I met a pack of cards, to fly from it, as from the face of a serpent.”

Many quarrels arose out of gambling, and were settled in Lincoln's Inn Fields, in Hyde Park, or on the Field of the Forty Footsteps behind Montagu House. There was a story that two men had fought there for the hand of a young lady, who stood close to them and watched them as they fought. No grass, it was said, ever grew where her feet had trod.

Every gentleman was instructed in the art of swordsmanship, and a man would have been hounded out of society had he refused to give an equal the satisfaction he demanded. Even Dr. Johnson defended the practice.

“He who fought a duel,” he said, “did not fight from passion against his antagonist, but out of self-defence, and to avert the stigma of the world.”

The Society of Friends would, of course, have nothing to do with the practice, and here and there among the Evangelicals, a man was found who would refuse a challenge. Usually, however, he salved his conscience by firing into the air, or seeking to disarm, or not mortally wound his antagonist.

## DUELLING

Duels were fought for all sorts of reasons, and sometimes for no reason at all. Wilkes fought two duels over his article in the *North Briton*. Pitt called Mr. Tierney out for asserting that he (Pitt) had obstructed the defence of the country. Mr. Adam of the War Office was annoyed at Fox's remarks about the powder supplied to the army, and challenged him. Lord Byron, the poet's ancestor, fought Mr. Chaworth about a matter of pheasants. There were even clergymen who fought duels. One of these, a Mr. Bate, was given a deanery after he had fought three duels. A Mr. Allen, a clergyman, who killed his man in Hyde Park, was acquitted by the Jury, though the Judge summed up very strongly against him. His bishop does not seem to have taken any notice of the matter. Possibly he was of the same opinion as the Archbishop of York, who when he was attacked in the House of Lords, about his sermon on Divine right, said that if he were insulted, he should "know how to chastise any petulance."

If a man were convicted of killing his opponent in a duel, he was legally guilty of murder; but juries were very loathe to convict. He did not, however, usually wait for a trial; but was bundled into a chaise by his seconds, and retreated to the Continent, where he remained for a year or two till the matter had blown over. It was computed that during the reign of George III, ninety-one duels had ended fatally; but in only two cases had the death-penalty been enforced. One of the greatest evils of the duelling system was the existence of the bully, who, because he was a fine swordsman or a good shot, could terrorise society. There was "fighting Fitz Gerald," who was blackballed at Boodles. He let the committee know that he would fight them all if he were not elected to the club, and they reluctantly admitted him. The young woman, whose natural protector was no fighting man, could be at the mercy of these bullies. Very few managed to protect and avenge themselves, like the amazing female of whom Horace Walpole writes.

"Jemmy Lumley last week had a party of whisk, at his own house; the combatants, Lucy Southwell, who curtsies

like a bear, Mrs. Prigeau and a Mrs. Mackenzy. They played from six in the evening till twelve next day, Jemmy never winning one rubber and rising a loser of £2,000. How it happened, I know not, nor why his suspicions arrived so late ; but he fancied himself cheated and refused to pay. However, the Bear had no share in his evil surmises ; on the contrary, a day or two afterwards he promised a dinner at Hampstead to Lucy and her virtuous sister. As he went to the rendezvous, his chaise was stopped by somebody, who advised him not to proceed. Yet no whit daunted he advanced. In the garden he found the gentle conqueress, Mrs. Mackenzy, who accosted him in the most friendly manner. After a few compliments, she asked him if he did not intend to pay her. ' No indeed, I shan't, I shan't ; your servant, your servant.' ' Shan't you,' said the fair virago, and taking a horse-whip from beneath her hoop, she fell upon him with as much vehemence as the Empress-Queen would upon the King of Prussia, if she could catch him alone in the garden at Hampstead."

Heavy drinking sometimes led to a duel. A man would insult another in his cups, and perhaps have forgotten all about the matter the next day. The amount of alcoholic liquor which our ancestors consumed is amazing. There were one-bottle men, who were considered very temperate, two-bottle men and three-bottle men, and there were others, like Lord Carlisle, who drank all the red wine within his reach. A few choice spirits, Sheridan, Lords Eldon and Stowell and Professor Porson, could, it was said, drink six bottles at a sitting. Porson was always drinking ; he would sip ink if there happened to be nothing else at hand.

" They tell me, Sir John," said George III, to a gentleman renowned for his potations, " that you like a glass of wine."

" Those who have so informed your Majesty," replied the baronet, " have done me great injustice. They should have said a bottle."

It is amazing that men could drink so deeply and yet be able to carry on their everyday business. Bolingbroke would sit up the whole night drinking, and be at work the next

morning. Pitt and Carteret were three-bottle men, and Addison, Steele, and Goldsmith were notorious toppers. Perhaps notorious is not the right word. Very few of our ancestors would have seen anything wrong in this excessive drinking. It was the custom of the age, and was condoned by most people. The prejudice against the Methodists was partly due to the fact that they preached the virtues of temperance, and there is no doubt that their teaching and example had its influence, if not on the eighteenth, then on the following century. True, there was Lord Monboddo, who only drank water and lived to a good old age; but he held the preposterous theory that men were descended from monkeys, so no one paid any attention to him.

Foreigners commented upon the coarseness of our manners, and la Rochefoucauld said that he had "heard things mentioned in good society that would be the grossest taste in France." He visited England at the close of the century, when, according to contemporary authority, manners had very much softened and improved. The fact was, that great coarseness existed, side by side with great refinement and delicacy of feeling. Some of the novels and memoirs of the eighteenth century were of an incredible grossness; others could have been read and approved by Victorian moralists. Dr. Young declared that, in his time, all ladies of quality swore. It is a sweeping statement, and is not borne out by Fanny Burney, who would not put an oath into the mouth of any of her characters, as she was sure that such a thing would be offensive to her readers. She came, of course, of a middle-class family, who would be more particular about decorum than their betters, but her own and her father's gifts took her into the best society. The Government had done what they could to stop the use of bad language. In 1746 a statute was passed, whereby a man convicted of swearing could be fined, if he were a day labourer, private soldier or seaman one shilling, if of the middling classes two shillings, and should he be a gentleman five shillings. Like so much legislation in the eighteenth century, the Act became almost

a dead letter, and the Government lost a fine source of revenue. Swearing had become an ingrained habit. The Duke of Cambridge, coming out of Kew Church after listening to a discourse on the wickedness of swearing, remarked to his equerry that it was "a damned good sermon, by Gad!" The princes of the House of Hanover, with the notable exception of George III, did not set the country a good example, and the upper classes were only too apt to follow the Court. It must always be remembered, however, that there are men and women whose light shines even in a great darkness, and so it was in the eighteenth century. Many, perhaps we must say the majority, of the men in the upper classes and a large number of women, lived a life of habitual immorality. The men took their pleasure where they pleased. They would keep a mistress until they were tired of her, and would then cast her out into the street. London was crowded with these unhappy women, every place of amusement and public resort was full of them. That a wealthy man should lead a decent life and be a faithful husband was considered to be almost an anomaly. The women too, like Hogarth's neglected wife, often consoled themselves for their husband's desertion and took a lover. Marriages were frequently arranged by parents who were looking out for good matches and were sometimes more concerned with settlements than with their children's affections. The arranged marriage was not, however, the universal thing that it was in France. The *Tatler* and the *Spectator* had inveighed against it, and other moralists condemned it. Though some parents coerced their children, others allowed them a reasonable liberty of choice. When Charles Pratt, the son of the Chief Justice, wished to marry Elizabeth Jeffreys, her father wrote to the prospective bridegroom: "I have sounded my daughter's inclinations with respect to matrimony, since the receipt of your letter, and I find that she does not care to listen to any proposal of that sort at present."

Later on the young lady changed her mind and they were married. A letter of hers to her betrothed throws a curious



light upon the very formal customs which had existed in some families.

“Mr. Richardson desires his compliments, and seemed vastly surprised when he heard I wrote to you. He told me, girls were not so bold in his day.”

As a matter of fact, the young women of the upper classes enjoyed a certain amount of liberty. At a private party, a man could address a woman without a formal introduction. Society was then so small that everyone was known, and the presence of a mere adventurer could be easily detected. Girls had perhaps more opportunity to become acquainted with men than in Victorian times.

If parental opposition persisted, the young people could make a runaway match. Before the year 1753, it was only too easy to be married in London. We may read in Blackstone that,

“any contract made *per verba de presente* and in cases of co-habitation *per verba de futuro* was deemed valid marriage to many purposes, and the parties might be compelled in the spiritual courts, to celebrate it in *facie ecclesiae*.”

There were besides, the Chapels of the Savoy and of St. James's, Duke's Place, and the Holy Trinity Priory, which stood on the site of ancient religious houses, and Mayfair Chapel which was unconsecrated. These places of worship were outside the jurisdiction of the bishops and marriages were performed there without banns or licence. It was a practice which the Church frowned upon and had tried to put down. Clergymen might be deprived and excommunicated for celebrating such marriages; but there were always parsons in the Fleet and the Bench, who cared little for excommunication, and possessed nothing of which they could be deprived. They were ready to marry anyone for a guinea, or even for the price of a bottle of wine. Between October 1704 and February 1705 nearly three thousand persons were married in the Chapel of the Fleet. In 1712 the use of the prison chapels for such marriages was forbidden; but this only meant that the

clergyman moved into the Rules and either hired a house or erected a small chapel. He hung out the sign of two clasped hands, with the words "Marriages performed within," and sent forth touts to decoy the unwary to the altar of Hymen. Pennant tells us, that when in his youth he had been passing by the prison, he was often accosted by one of these emissaries. "Sir, will you not walk in and be married," they urged, and in some cases they would even provide a bride. There were also cases of forcible abduction in which a clandestine marriage was hastily solemnised. Very often it was used by soldiers, sailors, coachmen and other itinerant persons, who could not have been long enough in one parish for their banns to be called ; but a certain number of the upper classes certainly availed themselves of these facilities. The Duke of Hamilton married the beautiful Elizabeth Gunning at the Mayfair Chapel, in such haste, that he had not even provided a ring, and one from a convenient bed-curtain had to be used. Dr. Keith, who was in the habit of marrying about six thousand persons every year, hesitated at the idea of wedding anyone so exalted ; but the Duke over-ruled his scruples. If Dr. Keith would not marry them, he said, he would send for the Archbishop. When Lord Hardwicke's Act was passed in 1753, which made all such clandestine marriages illegal, Dr. Keith broke forth into furious denunciation, "Damn the bishops," he exclaimed, "so they will hinder my marrying ! Well let 'em. I'll buy two or three acres of ground and under-bury 'em."

After this Act was passed the only expedient for thwarted lovers was to flee to Scotland in a post-chaise. It was a fine theme for novelists ; but in real life the well-brought-up girl was, as a rule, so imbued with the idea of parental rights and the virtue of obedience that she shrank from such expedients.

If marriage was an estate easily entered, it was much more difficult to escape from it. A divorce could only be obtained by a special Act of Parliament, and it was a most troublesome and costly affair. If husbands and wives did not agree they usually went their own way. There were, of course, examples of a great love and devotion which lasted a lifetime ; but on

the whole in the higher ranks, the married estate was looked upon with cynical aversion.

Horace Walpole tells us how the Duke and Duchess of Richmond took their two daughters to a ball, and how the Duke sat the whole evening at his wife's side kissing her hand. Such conduct was, however, considered almost as indecent in those days as it would be in these. Though husbands and wives were invited together to all social functions they frequently saw very little of each other. Englishmen had a fashion much commented upon by foreigners, of congregating together to the exclusion of their womenkind. A wife was often left to get through the long day as best she might, only being in her husband's company in the evening at some ball or rout. There were cases of gross cruelty and oppression. Edward, Lord Coke, shut his wife up in a tower at Holkham to bend her, he said, to his will. She had powerful relations and a writ of Habeas Corpus was applied for, resulting in a trial at the King's Bench. Other women were not so fortunate.

Many a neglected wife solaced herself with her children, and studied their education and well-being. It is to be feared, however, that this was not very common in the upper classes. London was admittedly an unhealthy place, and the children were often left in the country in the care of nurses and governesses, or, in some cases, they were put out to nurse in cottages on their parents' estates. It was only towards the close of the century, when a more serious tone pervaded some sections of society, that mothers began in any marked degree to concern themselves with the upbringing of their own children.

A few women occupied themselves with religion and philanthropy. Hannah More, as we know, gave up all the delights of a pleasant and highly intellectual society to minister to the heathen in a Somersetshire village. We find Mrs. Carter and Miss Talbot busy, with others of their friends, running a society for the relief of distress, while Lady Huntingdon was one of the religious leaders of her age.

Other women had intellectual pursuits. In the year 1750,

## THE LIFE OF THE UPPER CLASSES

Mrs. Montagu banished cards from her drawing-room, and began to give evening parties, at which conversation was the only entertainment. She was thought very odd indeed ; but it was observed that intellectual men, who could not be induced to go to the ordinary rout or card party, were to be found at Mrs. Montagu's. Smart society scoffed at the Blue Stockings, as it scoffs at anything, which is not quite vapid and senseless ; but many people regarded that little coterie as an oasis in an intellectual desert. Besides Mrs. Montagu and her blue friends, there were other ladies, not learned perhaps, but full of wit and charm, women like Lady Cowper and Lady Louisa Stuart. There were the opera and concerts for those who cared for music. Many went because it was the fashion, but others, as we may see from Fanny Burney's early diaries, had a genuine knowledge of, and delight in music. A few women painted really well, and some knowledge of drawing and music was considered an essential part of every young lady's education. By the end of the century, the upper-class woman had generally learnt some language beside her own, and had acquired a fair knowledge of English literature.

*Evelina* made an enormous sensation when it came out, and the author was fêted and flattered wherever she went. She was, however, very shy about her work, and perhaps, like Mrs. Radcliffe, that most popular novelist, thought that there was something unfeminine in authorship. "There was also," says the writer of Mrs. Radcliffe's memoir, "in the feeling of old gentility which most of her relations cherished, a natural repugnance to authorship, which she never entirely lost."

Needlework was, of course, a very popular pursuit, and many beautiful pieces of eighteenth-century embroidery have come down to us. It is said that Queen Mary revived a taste for this art in England. All girls, and some boys, were taught to sew and embroider. They did wonderful samplers in minute stitches, and as they grew older many ladies embroidered gowns and aprons, shoes and garters, caps and stockings.

## AMUSEMENTS. DANCING

Pray keep me tight  
From morn till night

is the motto on one pair of garters. There were portraits of Queen Anne and Prince George of Denmark in *petit-point*, charming little birds made of silk and wool, and beadwork trays and baskets. Queen Caroline, the wife of George II, busied herself in knotting which was then a fashionable pursuit. She enquired of one courtly prelate whether this work might be done on Sundays. "Your Majesty," the Bishop answered, "may not."

The majority of upper-class women spent their days and nights in a constant round of card-parties, balls, masquerades, entertainments, shopping, and paying calls. They went to the theatres and the pleasure gardens, to *ridottos*, to the Park. These we shall describe in other chapters.

Towards the end of the century the rich Nabob from the Indies was beginning slowly and with difficulty to shoulder himself into society. His wife and daughters were only too eager for invitations. It was not this sort of people, however, who gate-crashed into Devonshire House to the great disgust of Lady Louisa Stuart. She writes of "the astonishing meanness and unfeeling assurance of some ladies who extorted tickets, which were not designed for them, by messages to the Duchess of Devonshire and Lady Spencer."

Dancing was a very popular amusement. Country dances, which some authorities think were originally of English origin, came over from France during the eighteenth century. The dancers stood in two long lines, the men on one side and the women on the other, opposite their partners. There were various figures, but Sir Roger de Coverley is fortunately still with us as an example of what these dances could be. There were also quadrilles and minuets. It was the custom for a man to dance with the same lady all the evening, and in some ranks of society, though perhaps not in the highest, he might call for his partner, escort her to the ball, and bring her back again, very much in the same manner that he does to-day. According to la Rochefoucauld the English danced very badly,

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“without the least step or rhythm; they make no study of dancing as we do,” he says, “the women hold themselves badly with their heads forward, their arms hanging loose and their eyes cast down.”

Yet learning to dance was part of a girl's education and there were many instructors. There was the dancing master at Duke's Long Room in Paternoster Row, who advertised as follows,

“Grown gentlemen or ladies are taught a minuet or the method of country dances, with the modern method of footing and that in the genteelist and most private manner, and for the greater expedition of such gentlemen as chuse to dance in company, there's a compleat set of gentlemen assemble every Monday and Wednesday evening for the said purpose. Gentlemen and ladies may be waited on at their own houses by favouring me with a line directed as above. Likewise to be had at my house, as above, a book of instructions for the figuring part of country dances with the figure of the minuet annexed thereon, drawn out in characters, and laid down in such a manner that, at once casting your eye on it, you see the figure directly formed as it is to be done, so that a person even, that had never learnt, might, by the help of this book, soon make himself master of the figuring part. Such as reside in the country, I doubt not, would find it of immediate service as they have not always an opportunity of resorting to a dancing master.”

Almack's, the Assembly Rooms in King Street, St. James's, were opened in 1765 by a Scotsman named Macall. He had married the Duchess of Hamilton's maid, and it was said that the Duke financed his enterprise. There being at that time a prejudice against Scotsmen, Macall transposed his name, and called the place Almack's. It was run by a committee of ladies, who arranged for weekly balls to be held there during the season. The subscription was ten guineas, a very large amount in those days, “you may judge from the sum,” Selwyn wrote, “that the company is chosen.” It was indeed very difficult to get into Almack's and money in itself was of little help. To have the entrée at Almack's was the aim of

many a fine lady, and it was far more of a social distinction than to have the entrée at Court.

Dancing and other amusements were generally in the evening, and there were periods in the day when no immediate diversion was in prospect. Then the ladies would take coach or chair and go down to the City to visit the mercers and the toy-shops. The latter certainly sold toys and games but they had besides all kinds of china ornaments, trinkets and nicknacks. They were as much frequented by women as by children; indeed, grown-up people played with "babies," as they called their dolls, and also with the "baby houses," which came over from France early in the century. Women of the eighteenth century were often reproached for going to mercers' shops, and having the whole contents turned over for their amusement, without buying, or intending to buy, any single article. It is obvious that women who did this must have had curiously vacant minds. The fashionable lady is, indeed, the subject of ridicule, satire and admonition all through the centuries. She is reproached for her lack of sense and morals, for neglecting her children, betraying her husband and ruining her household. She wore a masculine riding dress, took snuff in church, and had even been known to drive a four-in-hand in the Park. It was all most deplorable, but the female never listened to reason, or to all the divines, essayists and playwrights who would have corrected her. She was, in fact, essentially very much the same sort of creature as the men who surrounded her.

If morals were lax, manners were very formal. There were certainly exceptions; but as a rule, persons of good breeding had a severe and inflexible code. Great men exacted the most extraordinary deference. Chatham never allowed a permanent official to sit in his presence, a nobleman was always "My lord," even to his most intimate friends. Lady Portarlington remarked to her sister on the easy familiarity of family life in Ireland, how the children put their arms round their father's neck and kissed him. Such behaviour, she declares, would be thought very vulgar in England.

Mrs. Carter and Miss Talbot, intimate friends of long standing, never used Christian names when they wrote to each other; and a mother-in-law was the "humble servant" of her son's wife. On the other hand we hear of people crying, fainting, and going into screaming fits at an overcrowded drawing-room at St. James's; indeed, the lack of ordinary self-control among women, in the face of any danger or emergency, was generally deplorable. Among men, there was a tendency, when away from their womenkind, to break out into the greatest coarseness of speech and action, and also in some circumstances to be thoroughly ill-mannered. Men sat sucking oranges and cracking nuts in the House of Commons, and they would indulge in the most preposterous and silly practical jokes. Sheridan covered a dark passage with plates and dishes, leaving a way for himself to pass. His friend Tickell, following him, fell down and cut himself. "How amazingly well it was done," said Lord Townshend, and that seems to have been the verdict of society upon that, and upon other equally tiresome japes.

Living in London, as may be supposed, was a costly matter. Even when a man did not gamble, and when he and his wife only came to town for a few months during the season, life was very expensive. "Fifteen or sixteen hundred a year," says Lady Louisa Stuart, "would not do much for two people who must live in London and appear in fine clothes at St. James's twice a week." Fifteen or sixteen hundred would be equal to between three and four thousand a year nowadays and there was no income-tax. Clothes, as Lady Louisa suggested, cost a great deal, and immense sums were spent on eating, drinking and entertainments.

One expense, from which there was no escape, was that of a funeral. Among the well-to-do, it was enormously costly, and the whole paraphernalia of grief was overwhelming. A hatchment, with the arms of the deceased, was hung outside the house, the knocker was swathed in crêpe, and a mute in black garments stood mournfully by the door. The corpse was laid out in a darkened room hung with mourning, where



## FUNERAL POMP

wax candles, in sconces against the wall, shed a pale gleam. There the deceased lay in state, and was visited by his friends and acquaintances and by a vast crowd of other people. Ten thousand persons, it was said, passed before the coffin of Lady Coventry, who had been that famous beauty, Maria Gunning. The hearse, with its great plumes of ostrich feathers, was followed by black coaches, and the horses had saddlecloths of black velvet, which reached almost to the ground. In the case of a man or woman of rank, the funeral was often at night, and the procession was attended by a large retinue carrying torches and flambeaux. There were presents to the mourners of gloves and scarves and mourning rings, and a great feast was provided for all who attended. The room in which the deceased had slept was shut up for weeks, or sometimes for months. Addison satirises this peculiar custom in the *Spectator*, when he tells us how all the best rooms in Sir Roger's house were permanently closed. Some time after the funeral the hatchment outside the house was taken down, and removed to the church, where it hung upon the walls for many a year. We may still see them in our churches, though an immense number were taken down in the last century. So, in all the panoply of woe, ended the life of that very glittering creature, the gentleman of fashion.

## THE LIFE OF THE MIDDLE CLASSES

“OUR most respectable families,” says Gibbon, “have not disdained the counting-house or even the shop. In England, as well as in the Italian Commonwealths, heralds have been compelled to declare that gentility is not degraded by the exercise of trade.”

Gibbon's shopkeeping ancestors married into noble families, which was quite usual in seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century England. As the century advanced, however, a very silly notion crept in that trade was somehow or other degrading. It is said that the Hanoverians brought it, as they brought many bad things with them from Germany. Be that as it may, the gentleman began to look beyond the shop and the counting-house for a profession for his son. There were, to be sure, other openings. The army needed officers, the navy was growing in strength, there were places and perquisites to be picked up at Court. On the other hand the merchant and shopkeeper, though they might envy the gentleman who lived an idle life at the other end of the town, had not much use for the gentleman's idle son in his counting-house or shop. If Defoe is to be credited, moreover, the man, whom his betters despised, had begun to despise himself. The complete tradesman had become the complete hypocrite, and the life would hardly have commended itself to a youth of any spirit.

“A tradesman,” Defoe tells us, “behind his counter must have no flesh and blood about him, no passions, no resentment. He must never be angry, no, not so much as seem to be so.” Defoe goes on to tell us of men who were so exasperated at this unnatural state of self-command that they

rushed upstairs, fell into frenzies, and beat their heads against the wall.

"I heard once," he continues, "of a shopkeeper that behaved himself thus to such an extreme that when he was provoked by the impertinence of customers beyond what his temper could bear, he would go upstairs, beat his wife, kick his children about like dogs, and be as furious for two or three minutes as a man chained down in Bedlam, and again when that heat was over, would sit down and cry faster than the children he had abused, and after the fit, he would go down into the shop again and be as humble and courteous and calm as any man whatever."

Boastful and rough, your first son is a Squire,  
The next a tradesman meek and much a lyer,"

says Pope who was himself a linen-draper's son.

In 1800, a book was written, which purported to give the parentage and antecedents of the various City Fathers. It cannot have been popular east of Temple Bar. Among the hundred and sixty-four names, seven might have been described as belonging to men of gentle birth, one of whom indeed was the son of an earl. The majority, however, were self-made men. One of them began life in a small oil shop in Aldgate, and married a niece of Check Apron Sal, a washer-woman. Another came up to London as a penniless lad from Wales. There was also an alderman who was the son of a smuggler in the Channel Islands. One or two are described as "perfectly uneducated or having only learned to read and write after they grew up." There were men who began life as porters, shoeblacks, servants and waiters, who were the sons of day-labourers and very poor men. How they amassed their fortunes we do not know. Sometimes the industrious apprentice married his master's daughter, sometimes the small trader was lucky upon Change, and there were perquisites and emoluments to be picked up in the City. The middle classes had begun to build up a separate life for themselves. It was on the whole a prosperous comfortable life—too comfortable and almost showy, Defoe thought.

## THE LIFE OF THE MIDDLE CLASSES

“When I see young shopkeepers,” he says, “keep horses, ride hunting, learn dog language, and keep the sportsman’s brogue upon their tongues I am always afraid for them.” He also complains that tradesmen had “their parlours set off with the tea-table, and the chocolate pot, and the silver coffee pot, and often times an ostentation of plate into the bargain.”

They wore swords, too, like gentlemen, and long perukes, and were to be seen sometimes at balls and masquerades at gaming houses and on the race-course. Goldsmith is shocked when he meets a man like “Jack Varnish, an humble seller of prints,” at Epsom race-course, and resolves never “to lay out another penny with him.” The more sensible tradesman eschewed such delights, realising that they were bad for trade; but the class, as a whole, was beginning to spend its larger income on comforts and luxuries, undreamed of a hundred years before. The merchant and even the shopkeeper had a manservant. When their wives went out to church or to shop, they were no longer content to have the eldest ‘prentice lad to carry the prayer-books or push anyone out of the way, who might try to take the wall of them. Some shopkeepers even had their own coaches; but a man generally waited until he retired before indulging in this extravagance. We may remember that Mrs. Gilpin would not have the hired chaise stop before her own door, as she thought that it savoured of ostentation.

In Defoe’s day a tradesman was reckoned to be doing very well if he made as much as four hundred a year, though there were men who made much more, and some who retired with fortunes of £20,000. These plutocrats went into the country, bought land and founded county families. There were, Addison considered, “greater estates to be got about Change than at Whitehall or St. James’s.” Those who got them were, no doubt, some of the thrifty men, whom Addison met at Robbin’s Coffee House, giving bills for the value of large estates, and who had just dined at the fivepenny ordinary. At a time when the news of a victory travelled very slowly, the man who received it early might make a great fortune.

## LONG HOURS

The Jew, Medina, travelled about in Marlborough's suite and paid him, it was said, £6,000 a year for the earliest intimation of his plans and his successes. He made an enormous fortune.

The ordinary trader worked for very long hours. He came down to his shop about seven in the morning, when the sleepy 'prentices had just crept out of their beds under the counter and were taking down the shutters. He kept his shop open till nine or ten at night, only going out in the middle of the day for an hour to take his dinner. If he lived over the shop, he climbed up the stairs to the parlour, where his wife and the maid were bringing in the boiled mutton. If his home were in the country, he took his dinner at a tavern.

"You never missed Mr. Tradeswell from the shop from seven to twelve and two to nine," says Defoe. As the century advanced, the dinner hour might grow a little later; but it was always earlier than in the West End.

"The further you go from the Court into the city," said Moritz, the Swiss pastor, "the more regular and domestic the people become, and there they generally dine about three o'clock, as soon as the business of Change is over."

Offices and counting houses did not open quite as early as the shops, but for everyone the working day began much earlier than at present. All business places and most shops closed on Sundays; though towards the end of the century an evil practice of Sunday trading arose in some parts of London. As for holidays, there was Christmas Day and generally Good Friday, and the apprentices and workmen insisted on trapesing off on Easter Monday to the fairs at Greenwich or Tottenham Court. Really careful thrifty shopkeepers seldom took a holiday.

John Gilpin's spouse said to her dear  
Though married we have been  
These twice ten tedious years yet we  
No holiday have seen.

The careful lady, moreover, loaded her husband with case

bottles of home-made wine, regardless of the feelings of the landlord at the Bell at Edmonton.

Providing for the needs of husband, children, servants and apprentices took up many weary hours, and in some cases the city wife would help in the shop. People ate hot suppers in London, besides a substantial dinner in the middle of the day. The careful housewife went to the markets of Covent Garden or Leadenhall Street, or to street traders, who had their stalls in the thoroughfares of the town. In the early days of the century, Smollett tells us, the tables of the middle classes "produced nothing but plain boiled and roasted, with a bottle of port and a tankard of beer." We also hear of dinners consisting of large boiled fish, boiled mutton and the plain boiled cabbage so beloved by our nation. Smollett laments that early simplicity, and complains that,

"they make sumptuous entertainments, and treat with the richest wines of Bourdeaux, Burgandy, and Champagne. The substantial tradesman, who was wont to pass his evenings at the ale-house for fourpence halfpenny, now spends three shillings at the tavern, while his wife keeps card tables at home."

Smollett's complaints are, in fact, much the same as Defoe's; there is no doubt that as the century advanced the middle classes became much more prosperous and consequently more luxurious. Their table manners were not good. Swift complained bitterly that food was pressed upon him with a tiresome insistence, and that he gave offence if he did not eat enormously. In Hogarth's "City Feast" we see a man plunging his own knife and fork into a dish. Drinking vessels were often used in common, and a tankard of ale would be passed round the dinner table. When glasses were provided, it was thought polite to drink after a lady, and if there were finger-bowls the company rinsed their mouths from them. Defoe's "ostentation of plate" was only to be seen in the wealthiest houses. Sterne tells us that the coffee pot was put to various uses, and would "serve to give water, lemonade and orgead, to say nothing of coffee and chocolate."

## MOVING TO THE SUBURBS

There was a pleasant custom in the City that when a gentleman called at a house, he kissed the ladies in turn. A visitor from another class, unaware of this, heard one of the women whisper to a friend, "I believe he thinks we smoke tobacco."

As the middle classes became more luxurious, they found the city dirty, stuffy, and evil-smelling, and they began to look around for pleasanter and healthier dwellings. Some moved to Hatton Garden or Bloomsbury, others went as far into the country as Epsom and rode up to London every day.

"City tradesmen," we are told, "make their families, generally speaking, rather provide suppers than dinners, for 'tis very frequent for the trading part of the company to place their families here [Epsom] and take their horses every morning to London, to the Exchange, to the Alley, and the warehouses, and be at Epsom again at night."

Even the smaller man, who still lived over his shop, had often his little box at Clapham or Kensington, where he spent his Sundays. Thomas Holcroft tells us of the genteel family, who lived at Turnham Green, and who complained of the lack of rational society there, "the villas of the place having become the country houses of wealthy but ignorant tradesmen, butchers, tailors, tallow-chandlers, etc., who make these their holiday and Sunday seats."

New houses, fresh from the builder's hands, were much sought after, and if they had basement kitchens so much the better. Servants were plentiful, and though wages had gone up, they were still very low. The wealthier tradesman could easily afford a large number of servants, and it was the fashion to have basements.

These rich men lived very much in the same style as the class above them. They had their handsome houses, fine furniture, and silver plate. They and their sons rode to business every day on good horses much to the disgust of Defoe, who thought such extravagance unbecoming and that walking exercise was beneficial. They had, of course, thrown aside what Defoe calls "the frugal badges of trade," or, if they wore the dress of their calling, it would be only in their

shop or place of business. Their wives and daughters dressed in expensive stuffs and even adopted the follies and fashions of Mayfair.

"They have," says the *Female Tatler*, "their toilets and their fine nightgowns, their chocolate in the morning and their green tea two hours later. Turkey polts for their dinner, and their perfumed washes and clean linen equip them for the Parade."

Whether the citizen mixed in upper-class society depended entirely on his birth. It is not to be supposed that Jack Baker, the linen-draper, who was my Lord Fermanagh's nephew, could not have gone to Court, if he had had a mind to, and have become a member of White's; or that my Lord Townshend's brother, the merchant, would not have been welcomed in any society. The really great men in art or literature were received by everyone, even if they had stepped out of a house of business or from behind a counter. They were sometimes condescended to and patronised, it is true; but there were men who could not have been treated in this way. Pope would retaliate very bitterly on those who slighted him, and few attempted to patronise the Great Cham when he was once established in his glory.

Education varied; there were excellent schools in the City and to these a large number of tradesmen sent their sons. The greatest scholars came out of middle-class homes, and foreigners were often astonished to find a tradesman quoting the classics. The education of the girls was generally very poor. There were schools, no doubt, where the pupils were taught to read and write, to do fine needlework, and to play a tune or two on the harpsichord; but this was as far as their education generally got. Arithmetic was not much taught to girls, indeed cyphering was looked upon as something rather masculine and not suited to the female mind. A school near Finsbury Square advertised as follows in *The Times* of January 1798.

"Mrs. Cross respectfully informs the gentry, merchants



and her friends in general that her school will recommence on Monday 22nd inst. and that she has accommodation for five more young ladies as boarders. She hopes that the flattering success she has met with these fourteen years in educating the daughters of some of the first families of the City (to whom references may be had) will be no small recommendation to those ladies and gentlemen who may honour her with their patronage. The house stands in a very airy and healthy situation, three doors from the Square, of which Mrs. Cross has a key and in which the young ladies will walk as often as convenience and the weather permit."

A large number of girls did not go to school. It was considered more genteel to keep a governess at home, and so some poor woman who knew very little more than her pupils was engaged to teach them. They generally learnt dancing, for unless their fathers had very strict views and disapproved of such things, they looked forward to my Lord Mayor's balls on November 9 and on Easter Monday. They might also dance at the City Assembly, which was the Almack's of the middle classes. Girls were very well instructed by their mothers in the art and craft of keeping a house, in cooking, washing, baking bread, clear starching, and needlework. Some of them could sing, and there is always a minority in any civilised society which rises above it, and insists on being educated. Mrs. Thrale was the wife of a brewer, Fanny Burney the daughter of an organist, Mary Moser, the R.A., came of a middle-class family, Elizabeth Elstob was a governess. There were circulating libraries, and hosts of authors whose books were written for middle-class readers. What the City maiden suffered from more than lack of education was the want of exercise. A young woman could not walk alone in the City, and in any case the crowded noisy streets were ill-adapted for walking. Middle-class women seldom rode, and the only out-of-door game ever indulged in by eighteenth-century females, that of archery, was confined to the upper classes. The indoor and sedentary life which they led must have been the cause of much ill-health and that excessive timidity which seems to have been the characteristic

of so many middle-class women. It was unusual for girls in this rank of life to engage in any trade or profession, though there were some who taught and a few who helped their parents in the shop. Widows could carry on their husband's businesses, though, as Defoe points out, it was difficult for them to do so. The usual career for the City maiden was marriage. There were occasional instances of men of rank marrying city heiresses. It was usually a cold-blooded affair arranged by some intermediary, in which the impecunious suitor bartered his title against the lady's money bags. We hear, however, of one or two really romantic affairs. Lord Westmorland ran away to Gretna Green with Miss Child, the rich banker's daughter. Her father pursuing in a coach and four, Lord Westmorland shot one of the leading horses through the back window of the chaise, and having thus ingratiated himself with his future father-in-law, carried off his lady to Scotland.

Steele inveighed against the arranged marriage, which was so common in his day.

"The generality of parents and some of these of quality," he says, "instead of looking out for introducing health of constitution, frankness of spirit or dignity of countenance, into their families, lay out all their thoughts upon finding out matches for their estates and not their children . . . and honest Coupler, the conveyancer, says he can distinguish upon sight of the parties before they have opened any point of their business, which of the two has the daughter to sell."

Steele also inveighs against the comparatively new practice of drawing up marriage settlements, which he seemed to think introduced a mercenary spirit into matrimony. In an age when a married woman could possess no money of her own, they were often her only stand-by and protection, and few prudent fathers allowed their daughters to marry without them. These marriages of convenience were often arranged by some go-between, who charged a commission on the lady's dowry or the gentleman's expectations. There were also matrimonial advertisements in the newspapers. An agreeable

## MARRIAGES

young lady with a handsome fortune was anxious to meet a young gentleman with good estates. If the handsome fortune had not been exaggerated, there should have been little difficulty.

Before the year 1753, as we have said in another chapter, it was fatally easy to be married in London. When Lord Hardwicke's Act was before the House, Charles Townshend opposed it, on the ground that younger sons would be debarred from eloping with wealthy heiresses. There were not many of these marriages in the City, though some thrifty parents, who shrank from the great expense of an ordinary wedding, encouraged the young people to slip away to the Fleet or the Savoy Chapel. The majority of the brides were married with the utmost respectability in their parish churches. They had been provided, most probably, with a marriage portion and most certainly with a trousseau. There were gowns of watered tabby or paduasoy or bombazine or whatever the fashion dictated. There were stacks of linen, for people only washed their clothes and household linen once a month even in London. The young lady might have spun some of her sheets and tablecloths herself; but spinning was not so much the fashion in London as in the country. The servant wenches were idle, it was said, and girls thought of nothing but beaux and amusements. There was, of course, no special wedding dress, the bride was married in something handsome and wore a hat or a bonnet, whichever might be the fashionable mode.

On the morning of the wedding day the bridal bed was decked with blue and green ribbons, and sprigs of rosemary, dipped in scented water, were tied to the posts. The guests were sometimes given wedding favours, and at one period there was a pleasant custom of presenting them with rings, made of twisted gold wire. They carried sprigs of rosemary with them to church, and when they drank the health of the bride and groom at the wedding feast they dipped their rosemary into the bowl, which was passed round the table. An immense banquet was generally served, and dancing and

music lasted until a late hour. Then the remains of the feast were collected and given by the bridegroom to the crowd of beggars who stood waiting at the doors. The bride was undressed and put to bed by her bridesmaids, and the groom was escorted to the door of her room by the best-man. In the early morning, the young couple were awakened by the clash of marrow bones and cleavers outside their window. It was the butchers' apprentices serenading the newly wed in their accustomed manner. The feasting and rejoicing were often kept up for several days. There was no honeymoon, as a rule, in the class of which we are speaking; though at the end of the century a few of the wealthier couples might travel as far as Margate or Brighton, the bride being accompanied by one of her bridesmaids.

About happiness in married life, it is not possible to generalise. Divorce was a most costly matter, only to be obtained by an Act of Parliament, and was almost unknown in the middle classes. Men and women took each other for better or for worse, and the wife was expected to close her eyes to marital infidelity. As a matter of fact, the morality of the middle classes was far stricter than that of their betters. Even their language was modulated into a gentle propriety.

"There is scarce a merchant's wife," says George Canning, writing in 1786, "but has her innocent unmeaning imprecations, her little oaths, softened into nonsense and, with squeaking treble, minces blasphemy into oddsbodikins, slitterkins, and suchlike, will swear you like a sucking dove, ay an it were any nightingale."

If weddings lasted for several days and were full of eating and drinking, the mournful pomp of funerals was also protracted. The fashion of lying in state was not confined to the rich and great.

"When a tradesman dies," Goldsmith tells us, "his frightful face is painted up by an undertaker, and placed in a proper position to receive company; this is called lying in state. To this disagreeable spectacle all the idlers in the town flock,

## BURIED IN WOOLLEN

and learn to loathe the wretch dead whom they despised when living. In this manner you see some who would have refused a shilling to save the life of their dearest friend, bestow thousands in adorning their putrid corpse."

"Well, well, 'tis a good child," says Croaker in the *Good Natured Man*, "so say no more, and come with me and we shall see something that will give us a great deal of pleasure, I promise you, old Ruggins, the currycomb-maker lying in state. I am told he makes a very handsome corpse, and becomes his coffin prodigiously."

All bodies had to be wrapped in woollen, as this would encourage the wool trade, which a quasi-paternal government was anxious to foster. To many the idea of a woollen shroud was abhorrent, and corpses were often wrapped in linen with a woollen outer cloak.

Odious in woollen 'twould a Saint provoke  
Were the last words that poor Narcissa spoke.

Pope's couplet refers to Nance Oldfield, the actress. In spite of the law, she was buried in a "very fine Brussell's lace head-dress, a Holland shift with a tucker and double ruffles of the same lace, with new kid gloves."

The body was generally kept for a week or more, as the fear of being buried alive had come down from the days of the Plague, when immediate funerals were a necessity. In the City, where families lived near their parish churches, the coffin was generally borne on men's shoulders to its last resting-place. Many churches kept velvet palls, which were carried by the friends and relatives of the deceased. There were never fewer than six pall-bearers, and there might well be twelve or more. In the case of a young unmarried woman, the pall-bearers were generally girls, and the pall was of white velvet or satin. It was considered to be a compliment to be asked to be a pall-bearer, and they and other near relatives and friends were usually presented with scarves, gloves and mourning rings. In some cases, particularly at the funeral of young girls, garlands were carried by two maidens and hung up in the church in memory of the deceased.

"They were made," says the *Gentleman's Magazine*, "after the following manner, viz. the lower rim or circlet was a broad hoop of wood whereunto was fixed at the side thereof part of two other hoops crossing each other at the top at right angles, which formed the upper part being about one-third longer than the width ; these hoops were wholly covered with artificial flowers of paper, dyed horn or silk, and more or less beauteous according to the skill and ingenuity of the performer. In the vacancy of the inside from the top, hung white paper cut in form of gloves, whereon was wrote the deceased age, name, etc., together with long slips of various coloured paper or ribbon. These were many times intermixed with gilded or painted empty shells of blown eggs as farther ornaments, or it may be as emblems of the bubbles or bitterness of this life, whilst other garlands had only a solitary hour glass hanging therein as a more significant symbol of mortality."

Towards the close of the century, the clergy began to object to the presence of these garlands in the church ; but loving hands had made them and as they could not be in the sacred building they were carried outside to rest upon the grave.

If the funeral was at a distance, a hearse would be employed. Curwen thus describes the funeral procession of Sir Bernard Turner, Sheriff of London, which proceeded from Bishops-gate Street to Tottenham. There had been a delay in the proceedings as an attempt had been made to arrest the body for debt, and some composition had to be arranged with the creditors.

"The hearse was preceded by two lines of the Artillery Association, headed by an officer and five privates abreast, their firelocks reversed, marching in slow pace ; muffled drums beating, trumpets sounding and other instruments playing the 104th Psalm tune. The hearse was adorned with large flowing plumes of ostrich feathers, just before which was led the horse of the deceased, dressed in black ; on the saddle were laid the hat, sword and boots crossed. A small detachment of the Artillery Company followed the carriage of the deceased and those of his brother sheriffs, after which the whole closed in by fourteen carriages, each drawn by two pair of horses."

## MOURNING

This was, of course, a very grand funeral; but every family exerted itself on such occasions.

When the body reached the church, the lid of the coffin was lifted, so that the officiating minister might see the corpse and give a certificate that it was wrapped in woollen. In many cases, especially in the City, the coffin was then removed and the body was committed to the earth wrapped only in its grave clothes. By this method the body speedily fell to dust, and the bones were removed, and, we are told, were "reverently cared for." As a matter of fact the crowded condition of London churchyards became a scandal, and bones were burnt in quantities in adjacent charnel houses.

At a funeral the church would be draped in black and every relative, even second and third cousins, put themselves into mourning. The house where the deceased had lived was also hung with crêpe, windows were shuttered and curtains drawn, and the family lived by candlelight at least till after the funeral and sometimes for very much longer.

Gibbon writes of going to see his father some weeks after his mother's death and finding him in these dim and gloomy surroundings.

An immense feast was provided after the funeral, for relatives often came from distant parts, a funeral being the only occasion when the members of some families ever met each other. They sat in gloomy silence in the darkened room, eating from great joints and drinking Madeira, that wine which, for some unexplained reason, was always thought particularly appropriate for funerals. The only distraction was the reading of the will, and this often gave rise to annoyance rather than satisfaction.

The middle classes thought much of eating and drinking. To some men it was almost the only pleasure in life. They generally ate and drank to excess, and one reason for the average shortness of life in the eighteenth century was no doubt gluttony. Drunkenness was not very common in the class of which we are speaking. Respectable business men did not fuddle themselves with liquor, though they often took

far more than was good for them. The vice of intoxication they usually left to their betters—it was bad for trade. Their lives, outside their business, were often extraordinarily narrow, and at the beginning of the century they had few interests. Even their amusements were circumscribed. The women had their card-parties and an occasional ball or rout ; the men were generally tied to the shop or counting-house, and too tired when they came home to sally out again looking for amusement. A few went in half-price to the theatre or the opera in the middle of the performance ; but the majority, if they wanted a little distraction, dropped into the coffee house or the tavern. There were, of course, men like Mr. Basbridge, who kept a shop in Fleet Street, where he sold silver and Sheffield articles.

“ His evening jollifications could not have ruined him as they did, but he became a jolly fellow before he had sufficiently established his business, and before it could bear to be neglected as all such men neglect their businesses.”

There was, no doubt, a minority among London tradesmen who cared for intellectual pursuits ; but generally, if a middle-class boy were at all intellectual, he gained a scholarship or exhibition at Oxford or Cambridge and stepped into one of the learned professions.

As we shall point out in another chapter, the London citizen could, if he wished, take an important part in the government of the city and as a freeman of his Company he would have a parliamentary vote. He was, in this respect, better off than the middle-class man in many provincial towns.



## THE LIFE OF THE POOR

As we read the social history of the eighteenth century we are driven to the conclusion that the state of the poor was far worse at the end than at the beginning of the period. Of the country this was certainly true. Enclosures and low wages were responsible for a misery and starvation unknown at the beginning of the century.

The conditions in London, however, were different. Wages there were higher than in the country, and if the increase in them during the century was not commensurate with the rise in the cost of living, at least the urban workman was better off than the rural labourer.

Reformers and moralists pointed out many of the evils and miseries in the lives of the poor. Their voices are certainly louder at the end of the century than at the beginning; but it may be that the conscience of England was awakening, and that more men were aware of the sorrows and disabilities of the poor.

Those who studied the Bills of Mortality of the metropolis noted a great improvement. Until the middle of the century the number of deaths had exceeded the number of births. As the century declined, so did the number of burials. Better medical knowledge and some slight diminution in the drunken habits of the people may have partly accounted for this; but the chief factor must have been increasing prosperity and a greater wage-earning capacity.

In the matter of wages nothing strikes us so much as this contrast between London and the country.

At the beginning of the century, the wages of a labourer in the metropolis amounted to 10s. or 12s. a week; in the

## THE LIFE OF THE POOR

country he thought himself well paid if he got 7s. and wages were sometimes as low as 4s.

A journeyman in London generally earned about 15s. a week in the more unskilled trades, and others such as printers, jewellers or chair carvers could easily get a guinea.

Silk throwsters, Defoe declared, gave 9s. or 10s. a week to cripples to turn wheels.

Money wages tended to rise as the century advanced ; but on the other hand the prices of many things were greatly increased, and it is probable that real wages remained stationary or even tended to decline.

There were some trades in which wages were very low. The textiles which employed large numbers of women and children, who were to be had very cheaply, paid low wages.

In 1771 the sail-cloth weavers informed the Middlesex justices that they could only earn 9s. a week, and that wages had, in fact, declined since the early days of the century.

The frame-work knitters got 9s. or 10s. a week and the trade was leaving London for the Midlands. The silk weavers in Spitalfields were among the poorest-paid operatives. They were continually rioting in the hope of obtaining better wages, and in 1763 they organised a strike.

"Masked and disguised in sailors' habits and otherwise armed with cutlasses and other dangerous weapons" they broke into the factories, cut the silk off the looms, and destroyed everything they could lay their hands upon.

Then they fell to picketing, by no means peacefully, and hanged and burnt the effigy of an unpopular master.

The Guards were called out, and the weavers were suppressed for the time. Trouble broke out again, however, as the strikers, "conceiving themselves greatly injured by the too free use of French and other wrought silks," urged the Government to forbid their import. This was carried into effect, but the weavers still rioted, and demanded higher pay. At last, after much disturbance and bloodshed, and the hanging of some of the ringleaders outside Bethnal Green Church, an Act was passed by which the wages of the silk weavers were

fixed by the Lord Mayor and the other civic authorities of London and Westminster.

This was known as the famous Spitalfields Act, famous because it was one of the few Acts passed by an eighteenth-century Parliament for the protection of the working man against his employer.

Custom largely decided the amount of wages paid; but there were doubtless many horrible cases of sweating. Women's work, especially the stitching of ready-made garments, and all kinds of needlework, was generally very poorly paid.

Hood's "Song of the Shirt" was written in the following century; and the author was moved to write it, on hearing that a wretched woman had been paid 2*d.* a dozen for making shirts.

The wages in the eighteenth century were often just as miserable. Women and children worked for very long hours, often under the most horrible conditions. The miseries of the little chimney sweeps is well known, and it was not until the following century and the untiring exertions of the great Lord Shaftesbury that these poor children were freed from their intolerable slavery. Though the conditions in other employments were not so bad, many children were killed or maimed in the course of their business, and the town was full of cripples and invalids, the martyrs of industry.

London was not then a great manufacturing city. There were the weavers of Spitalfields, the frame-work knitters, and the porcelain factories. There were stevedores and dockers, market porters, shop assistants, domestic servants, barmen, ostlers, chimney sweeps, hackney coach-drivers, watermen, but comparatively few factory hands.

The industrial revolution did not spread such a blight upon London as on the northern counties; and there were many men who were their own masters, and carried on their trades single-handed. When they worked for an employer, they were in personal touch with him, and there was more sympathy between master and man than was possible in "the dark Satanic mills" of the manufacturing north.

## THE LIFE OF THE POOR

"No man in England of sound limbs and senses," said Defoe, "can be poor merely from want of work," and he also declared that "the beggars of London and within ten miles round eat more white bread than the whole kingdom of Scotland."

Defoe may have been right about the amount of available employment at the beginning of the century, though the beggars and their white bread must have been a matter of pure conjecture. There were, in any case, as Addison points out, the maimed, the halt and the blind, the soldier disbanded after the war.

"Who can without remorse," he says, "see a disabled sailor, the purveyor of our luxuries, destitute of necessities? Who can behold an honest soldier that bravely withstood the enemy, prostrate and in want among his friends?"

Later in the century, when the metropolis was filled with crowds of starving poor, begging was often their only resource.

These unhappy creatures slept where they could, under arches, penthouses or market stalls. Sometimes they broke into empty houses, made fires of the bannisters and other wood-work, and remained there till they were dislodged by the owner or by a prospective tenant.

There is a story of a house agent showing a client over a residence which had been standing empty for some months and finding it completely gutted.

A beggar with money in his pocket could find a refuge in a night cellar, where he would drink or sleep till the following morning, or in the common lodging houses.

Some of these mendicants made large sums of money. There was, it is said, a King of the Beggars, who apportioned out districts to his subjects.

"Every alley," writes Francis Grose, "presents some miserable object covered with loathesome sores, blind, mutilated, exposed almost naked to the cold wintry blast."

Disease and mutilation were useful assets in the profession and were often counterfeited.

"I looked out of my window the other morning," says

Addison, "earlier than ordinary, and saw a blind beggar, an hour before the passage he stands in is frequented, with a needle and thread, thriftily mending his stocking. My astonishment was greater when I beheld a lame fellow, whose legs were too big to walk with an hour after, bring him a pot of ale.

"I will not mention the shakings, the distortions, and convulsions, which many of them practise to gain an alms. . . . There is the voice of an old woman who never begins to beg till nine in the evening, and then she is destitute of lodging, turned out for want of rent, and has the same ill fortune every night."

Children could be hired out from parish nurses and others at 4*d.* a night, and the beggars who took them frequently mutilated them in order to excite pity.

In these days the C.O.S. and other experienced societies implore us not to give to beggars. The same advice was proffered to the charitable public in the eighteenth century. There was, however, this difference. In these days, we may at least hope that every indigent person can obtain relief, either from public assistance, or from the many charitable societies. In the eighteenth century there was no such hope.

Accounts of the extreme destitution of the poor occasionally reached the charitable. In 1763 a prospective tenant was taken over a house in Stone Cutter Street by a house agent. In a room upon the first floor they found the dead body of a woman lying naked upon the floor. On the second floor was another dead body, also naked, and higher up in the garret they found three women nearly dying of starvation.

They seem to have been respectable people, endeavouring to make a living by selling baskets. One of them, named Pallcat, had been keeping the others, as far as she could, by ~~selling~~ her wares and pawning her clothes. The youngest, the orphan daughter of a working jeweller, had had employment in the silk mills at Spitalfields and also at a baby farm until her health gave way.

She applied for relief to the parish authorities, who refused it, though as a servant she had undoubtedly obtained a settlement, and was entitled to relief. The other women, who were

older, probably knew too much of the tender mercies of the poor law to apply to it for assistance. They helped each other with the wonderful generosity that the poor so often show to each other; the woman Pallcat nursing the other unfortunate creatures, working for them and pawning her clothes, to get them food.

We should much like to know what happened to her and whether the house agent and his client helped her. We are not told. She was one of the fine gems which lie hidden among the mud and slime of a great city. None of these women, we may notice, had applied to any of the parish clergy for assistance, or tried to get medical attention at a hospital. The clergy, with some outstanding exceptions, thought that their duty was done when they had read prayers and preached twice upon a Sunday. The hospitals only admitted patients who could produce a "recommend" from a subscriber, a wretched practice which unfortunately persists in a few cases to the present day.

An immense amount of building seems to have been done in the eighteenth century; but the housing conditions of the poorer classes were utterly wretched. A parallel to this may be found in the present age; but at least efforts are being made to cope with the evil.

In the London of the eighteenth century conditions remained much the same, and there were few efforts at improvement.

We must remember that overcrowding was characteristic of the age. Well-to-do people thought little of sleeping one or two in a bed. The pupils at expensive boarding schools were herded together under the most insanitary conditions. Servants slept in the kitchen or lay on the staircase and passages. Travellers at inns would share rooms and beds with total strangers.

Privacy did not seem to be valued even by those who could insist upon it. The eighteenth century was too near the age when solitude was dangerous, and men congregated in herds for mutual protection.

## THE MISERY OF THE POOR

Colquhoun estimated at the end of the century that there were "above twenty thousand miserable individuals of various classes who rise every morning without knowing where, in many instances, they are to lodge on the succeeding night."

This fluctuating population was swollen by hordes of migratory Irish who poured into London, particularly at the end of the century, to labour in the brickfields or to help with the hay harvest outside the metropolis. These men would lodge anywhere. They would share the beggars' quarters in night cellars or empty houses. They filled the common lodging houses. John Wesley, who laboured incessantly among the poor, speaks of their great misery.

"In the afternoons," he says, "I visited many of the sick, but such scenes who could see unmoved. There are none such to be found in a pagan country. If any of the Indians in Georgia were sick (which indeed rarely happened till they learned gluttony and drunkenness from the Christian), those who were near gave him whatever he wanted. O who will convert the English into honest heathens?"

"On Friday and Saturday I visited as many as I could. I found some in cells underground, others in their garrets, half starved with cold and hunger added to weakness and pain, but I found not one of them unemployed, who was able to crawl about the room. So wickedly, devilishly false is that common objection 'they are poor only because they are idle.'"

Many decent men were content with a garret at 1s. 6d. a week, and spent their leisure at a tavern or a coffee house. There they could eat and drink, read the news, write their letters, and have a good address for their friends.

The cockloft in St. Giles's, up three pairs of stairs, could be kept in decent obscurity.

Johnson's Irish painter assured that great man "that thirty pounds a year was enough to enable a man to live there (in a London garret) without being contemptible."

"Few people inquired where he lodged and if they did it was easy to say: 'Sir, I am to be found at such-and-such a

## THE LIFE OF THE POOR

place.' By spending 3*d.* in a coffee house he might be for some hours every day in very good company; he might dine for 6*d.*, breakfast on bread and milk for a penny and go without supper. On a clean shirt day he went abroad and paid visits."

There were, of course, many poor men who rented or even owned the houses they lived in. They generally kept one or at most two rooms for themselves and their families, and let out the others. Sometimes these rooms served for a workshop as well as a home. The overcrowding in Central London was no doubt partly due to the difficulties of transport and the danger of the roads.

The merchant and the rich shopkeeper, who had their own coaches, could drive home each night to their house at Islington or the villa at Fulham. The more highly paid workman though he would have appreciated and could have afforded a snug cottage at Camden Town, knew that the ways were dark and dangerous, and coach hire above his means. He crowded into the town to be near his work, and lived under conditions which seem incredibly horrible, even to us, whose housing standards are none of the highest.

There was continual immigration into the capital. Besides the Irish labourers whom we have mentioned, adventurers from all countries came to London. There was a large influx of Polish Jews and colonies of Huguenots were settled in Soho and at Spitalfields.

The effects on the health of the metropolis of this overcrowding amid the most insanitary conditions was evident.

Diseases such as typhus and smallpox were endemic. The death rate was very high, and the damage rate even greater.

When a man was earning good wages, he too often spent them in drink and the plenty of the English table was proverbial.

"English labouring people," says Defoe, "eat and drink, but especially the latter, three times as much in value as any sort of foreigners. Good husbandry and frugality are out of fashion."



Defoe is a carping critic and very much a praiser of former times, but travellers from France and elsewhere noticed the comparative comfort of the English working classes. The independence of the poor was also remarked upon with astonishment. The labourer would dispute the narrow pavement with the peer, and woe betide the latter if he tried to assert his right to it. He would probably find himself on his back in the muddy road. The deference which the countryman paid the squire was entirely lacking in London. There was little intercourse between the rich and poor, and often great hostility.

If wages were poor the price of staple commodities was low. Food, though it increased in cost at the end of the century, was very cheap. The average market price of beef was  $2\frac{1}{2}d.$  a pound and of mutton  $3d.$  Bread varied in price as wheat rose or fell.

In 1715 it was 82s. a quarter, and the poor man could have eaten wheaten bread had he so desired. If he bought it at all, it was usually what we call brown bread, and the staple food of many people was the barley loaf.

As the century progressed the poor began to demand pure white bread even when the price was as high as 1s.  $3d.$  the quartern. Home-made bread, which was so much eaten in the country, was rarely made in London. The poor man had few facilities for cooking, he generally sent his dinner, when he had one, to the bakers and subsisted largely on bread and tea.

The peculiar brand of philanthropist who is always telling the poor how to live on next to nothing, was busy in the eighteenth century. The London working classes were thriftless. "Many poor people in Scotland," they were told, "live and that very comfortably for months together upon oatmeal and barley meal." The London poor declined to do this nor did they take to such dishes as crowdy, which was boiling broth mixed with oatmeal, or frumenty, a concoction of barley and milk. "A soup made of barley meal, Indian corn and four red herrings pounded in a mortar" never

became really popular. The hungry labourer at the close of the century when the quartern loaf was 1s. 3d. was told that he was much better off than his forefathers. "Potatoes," says Eden writing in this strain, "are perhaps as strong an instance of the extension of human enjoyment as can be mentioned." Even the most starved and miserable of men could have mentioned other and more alluring forms of pleasure.

In 1741, 750,000 pounds of tea was imported into England and paid a tax of 5s. a pound. This tea which was sold in the shops for 12s. or 16s. the pound was beyond the reach of the poor. What they bought had generally been smuggled in, and was freely adulterated. In well-to-do houses, the used tea leaves were the perquisite of the cook, and could be bought at the back door for a few pence. The sort of brew which the poor made was often harmful, and many were the sermons which were preached upon the subject. They were adjured to leave it alone as something more poisonous and harmful than rum and Geneva. They were told that it would rob them of their strength, and land them in Bedlam or a debtor's prison.

The poor, however, with their usual sturdy independence, paid no attention to these diatribes. Some stimulant they must have, or life would have become quite intolerable.

The hours they worked were very long. There were no regulations, and in some cases mills and factories were working their employees sixteen or eighteen hours a day.

Bank holidays were unknown. The public offices still shut on November 5 and on Oak Apple Day, and on a dozen or more such feasts during the year; but they were not generally observed, and Christmas Day and Good Friday were the only days besides Sunday when the working man could be sure of a holiday.

Every employer did not work his men so unconscionably, and many hands who were on piece work absented themselves when they chose, and perhaps did not work for more than three or four days in a week.

The sordid brutality of life in these circumstances can hardly

be imagined. The amusements to which the masses flocked were too often degrading and cruel. They would rush to a bull-baiting or a prize fight, flock to a hanging, or to see the women whipped at Bridewell.

The mob could be excited by such catchwords as the Church and Dr. Sacheverell, No Popery, Down with the Boot (i.e. Lord Bute), Wilkes and Liberty.

Many of them were as pagan as the savages in an African jungle, and knew as little of politics as of religion, but they could be moved to deeds of violence and destruction by almost any catchword. They were extraordinarily faithful and amazingly fickle.

Wilkes was their idol for years, and yet as Walpole says, "if you had taken Paris, they would forget you the first Lord Mayor's Day or for the first hyena that comes to town."

At the beginning of the century Middlesex, which of course included London, was one of the most populous counties in England; by the end of the century, there had been an influx into the manufacturing north and Lancashire held the largest population.

In the last resort, the poor in those days, as in these, had recourse to the workhouse or to out-door relief. The latter had been the usual method of relief from the reign of Elizabeth till the middle of the eighteenth century.

As the number of destitute persons increased, and the poor rates soared up to the unprecedented sum of one million pounds for the whole of England and Wales, the country began to take alarm and parish vestries were authorised to build workhouses. Before this date a special Act of Parliament had been necessary for the creation of each one.

As we all know, workhouses are places where no work (beyond the necessary work of the house) is ever done; but this was not the original intention of their founders. The setting of the people to work was the aim of those who erected these institutions; but in spite of various resolutions

and enquiries into the matter by Parliament this was not always done.

Defoe attacked workhouses and charity schools because both institutions set people to work, and so took employment away from those who were trying to earn a livelihood.

The authorities may have realised this or they may have been merely inert. The fact remained that young and old were often herded together in these institutions with no occupation, and no training for any useful employment. The criminal and the degraded mixed freely with the respectable poor. The diseased, the lunatic, the prostitute, the poor mother in labour, were often confined together with no consideration of ordinary humanity or decency.

Towards the end of the century a most pernicious practice arose of farming out the workhouses to contractors, who were paid so much per head for the inmates and made what they could out of them.

The misery of adult paupers in workhouses is described by Crabbe; but the lot of poor children was even more horrible.

Parents who had large families or illegitimate children were allowed, nay, encouraged, to pay £10 or some other lump sum to the parish officers. The child was taken into the poor-house, and its life there was usually of very short duration. The small sum which had been paid for its maintenance was too often expended by the parish officers in feasting and drunkenness.

"As to 'saddling the spit,' as the parish feast used to be called," says Kenway, the philanthropist, "it will not give a day of life to an infant: on the contrary the custom of giving small sums seems to have induced an opinion that a parish child's life is worth no more than eight or ten months' purchase, and that there is a chance of its being so many days, and consequently occasioning a speedy release from all expence, and the money may go on good cheer.

"Experience justifies this suspicion so far that the traffic of receiving money in some instances seems but a small remove from innocent blood."

It appears incredible that the evils of such a state of things were not at once apparent. The legislature could not be wholly insensible to the miseries of the people. In 1767, having discovered at last that a great proportion of the infants and young children in the London workhouses died within a few weeks of their entry, Parliament enacted that all babies and young children should be sent at least five miles out of the metropolis, and should be entrusted to foster-mothers who were allowed 2s. 6d. per week to look after them. A gratuity of 10s. was also given to every woman who had taken a pauper child and had reared it satisfactorily for a year.

The poor called this "the Act for keeping children alive" and its consequences were most beneficial. There were about two thousand fewer burials each year in the metropolis, and enquiries in parishes to which the children had been sent showed that for the most part they were doing well.

Jonas Hanway was instrumental in passing a Bill to prevent pauper children being bound apprentice from early youth till the age of twenty-four. This was looked upon as a kind of slavery, as no doubt it was; but the eighteenth century regarded with equanimity the fact that hundreds of pauper children were sent off to mills and factories to slave under horrible conditions.

Unwanted boys and girls were even shipped to Virginia as indentured servants. It was useless for the poor creatures to protest.

"Some ill-disposed children," the authorities complained, "who under severe masters in Virginia may be brought to goodness, and of whom the City is especially desirous of being disburdened, declare their unwillingness to go." Whether they were willing or not they went to the slavery of the plantations.

Towards the end of the century improvements were made in many of the London workhouses, and some of these institutions were well and efficiently run. Eden gives us the bill of

## THE LIFE OF THE POOR

fare for the workhouse of St. Martin's in the Fields and on paper it certainly looks very well.

	BREAKFAST.	DINNER
Sunday :	Bread and butter.	6 oz. of meat without bone and greens.
Monday :	Milk Potage.	Pease soup.
Tuesday :	Milk Potage.	Beef and greens.
Wednesday :	Milk Potage.	Pease soup.
Thursday :	Milk Potage.	Beef and greens.
Friday :	Water gruel sweetened.	Barley gruel and milk.
Saturday :	Milk Potage.	1 lb. of plum pudding.

The supper was always bread and butter or bread and butter and cheese. In addition to the food, the guardians allowed a quart of beer to each inmate, and to married lying-in women, "one pot of porter for caudle the first 9 days, and 1 pint for 7 days." Certainly this was generous fare, and once in the season, we are told they were given salmon and mackerel, and there were "bunns on Good Friday, plum cake on Holy Tuesday, grey pease and bacon on Shrove Tuesday, pork and pease pudding on New Year's Day." Special directions were given that the sick were to be "nurtured each day with mutton and broth." The poor rates of this parish were 2s. 7d. in the pound. Plum pudding was a particularly generous item in the bill of fare, at the time when food was comparatively dear. In 1706, when provisions were plentiful and very cheap, the churchwardens and overseers of St. Clement Danes had the incredible meanness to take away the plum pudding from the poor and substitute a nasty mess of rice, milk, butter and spice whereby they saved £2 13s. 4d. per meal for six hundred persons.

We must remember, moreover, that the standard of life of the working man was very low, and that probably he was better off materially in one of the improved institutions than in his own home. That he lost his independence and freedom, his home and his family, all the things, in fact, which the normal man cares for most, did not concern the authorities. Their business was to keep down the rates, and to prevent paupers from settling in the parish. This matter of the

settlement of poor persons led to bitter wrangles and much legislation.

By an Act of the reign of Charles II justices were empowered to remove any persons entering the parish whom they might think likely to become a charge upon it. Not only paupers were chased back to their original birthplaces; but every respectable labouring man who rented a tenement of less value than £10 a year was considered as likely to become a charge, and could be removed by a magistrate's order.

"Likewise," the Act declares, "that felons and reputed thieves, and everyone who by the existing law shall be deemed a rogue and a vagabond, or an idle and disorderly person, or shall not be able to give a satisfactory account of him or herself, is to be considered as actually chargeable and liable to be removed, as is also every unmarried woman with child."

The cruelty and hardships of these laws are apparent. No sooner was a respectable man settled in a parish where there was a prospect of work, than he was liable to be removed, because he could not afford, or had not been able to find, a dwelling-place of more than £10 rateable value. No wonder that in these circumstances the man became a wanderer and a vagabond and that his children went to swell the large army of thieves and prostitutes.

The fate of the unmarried mother was even more horrible. Chased out of the parish where she had taken refuge, refused admittance to any other, for all parishes refused paupers if they could, she frequently died of exposure and maltreatment, or went to the only person who could and would protect her: the brothel keeper.

It was not until 1796 that this law was modified, and only persons who had become actually chargeable could be removed from a parish. Settlements gave rise to constant litigation, and often the authorities spent far more in getting rid of paupers, or in refusing to admit them into a parish, than they would have cost in maintenance for the rest of their lives.

The inhumanity of the eighteenth century is a thing which strikes us with horror. We consider that the changes in

opinions and morals in our own day are phenomenal ; but they are not greater than the change in public opinion which grew up in the nineteenth century as regards the treatment of the poor, the prisoner and the child.

It must not be supposed, however, that there was no humanity in the eighteenth century. There was a great number of charities, some of which had been founded centuries earlier, but many of which were of eighteenth-century origin.

The teaching of Wesley and Whitefield, reinforced in some degree by the humanitarian doctrines of Rousseau and the Encyclopædists, inculcated the old gospel of loving-kindness. The fruits which it bore may not have been as large or as varied as one might hope for ; but at any rate many feeble folk were nourished by them.



## THE GOVERNMENT OF LONDON

### THE CITY

THE City of London is now an area devoted entirely to warehouses, offices, banks and shops, interspersed with churches and public buildings. It has an extremely small resident population. On Sundays and national holidays its streets are deserted and it is like a city of the dead. Its condition was very different in the eighteenth century.

About the year 1700 the City had a population of some 150,000 persons packed to a density of two hundred to the acre. For many centuries it had withstood the attempted encroachment of monarchs. It had bargained and fought for charters and privileges. It never forgot that it had the right to close the City gates in the King's face, and that when he passed Temple Bar, he did so at the express invitation of my Lord Mayor.

The four representatives whom the City sent to Parliament were bound to carry out instructions given them in Common Hall, and in 1774 they had to sign an agreement to this effect, promising, moreover, that they would never accept from the King or his Ministers "any place, pension, contract, gratuity or emolument of any kind."

The livery men of the City denounced the American War and refused to raise a penny to support it.

The Lord Mayor and Aldermen petitioned feverishly in favour of John Wilkes. They denounced the King's Ministers as effete and extravagant and unpatriotic. They opposed Fox's India Bill, they expressed unqualified disgust at any attempt to increase the excise or the assessed taxes, particularly the income tax.

In 1769 Common Hall issued a list of instructions to its

parliamentary representatives. Among other things they were to keep a jealous watch over the Habeas Corpus Act, parliamentary privilege, and the rights of electors, which they judged were in danger of attack. They were to veto any use of public money in elections, the bribery of Members of Parliament or any increase in the power of the army. They were to advocate shorter parliaments and do everything possible to uphold the independence of the magistrates and to preserve the public faith.

Much of what they advocated were the tenets of nineteenth-century reformers, and they were the political convictions of the City throughout the greater part of the eighteenth century.

The citizens affected to despise the West End and the fops and nincompoops, who, they said, inhabited it. The one square mile of the City's streets contained all that was best and wisest in the nation, of that they were very sure. If the West End despised the City, and laughed at its fashions, its lack of breeding, and its tradesman-like mind, the City in its turn thoroughly disapproved of the idleness and extravagance and folly of its betters.

Perhaps it was a disapprobation not untinged with envy. Perhaps the City spark who rode on a hired hack in the park on Sunday would have taken my Lord Marquis's place at the levée if he could. He danced at the City Assembly. He might have preferred to dance at Almack's.

The government of the City was, in theory, one of the most democratic in England. The poorest inhabitant had the right to attend the yearly meeting of his Ward—the Wardmote as it was called. There he might find himself chosen as constable, scavenger or rate collector for the ward, or he might have the pleasure of electing neighbours for these unpaid and thankless offices.

In the early days of the century, the Ward Inquest compelled him to sweep the pavement clean outside his dwelling and even to put it into good repair. He must also hang out a lantern containing a candle on moonless nights, and take his turn as one of the City Watch.

Gradually these unpaid duties became less. The paving, cleaning and lighting of the streets were given to contractors, and decrepit and wholly useless old men were hired as night-watchmen.

Almost the only duty which devolved upon the householder was that of bringing forth his dirt and garbage to deliver to the Raker, who came round daily blowing his horn or sounding a wooden clapper. For failure to do this or any of his other duties the Ward Inquest might present him to the Wardmote, where he could be condemned to fine or imprisonment.

All sorts of complaints and petty offences were brought up before the Wardmote. The inhabitants of Lime Street complained "of a very serious deprivation of rest they experienced by the barking and yelling of the numerous dogs that draw the butchers' carts at a very early hour in the morning."

Other people disliked the continual roaring of the tiger at Exeter Exchange, or the noisy quarrelling of two women in Candlewick Ward, who "did live in great strife and debate to the great disturbance of the neighbourhood."

In the middle of the Ward meeting a proclamation was read out requiring "all persons to depart this court who are not freemen of London, and householders in the Ward."

As a matter of fact all but the poorest were freemen. It was a matter of payment, and cost, in the early days of the century, only £2 8s. 6d. No one could trade in the City unless he were a freeman, so that every merchant, shopkeeper or street pedlar must take out his freedom. This also protected him from impressment in the navy, a great boon when the press gang were charging down the Strand or Fleet Street, looking for sailors to man the ships which were fighting the French. The freeman could attend the meeting of his Precinct, which assembled at the ancient Guest House or the Vestry House of some parish within the Precinct.

The Precinct was a sub-division of the Ward, and Ward officers usually attended the meetings of the Precinct. They nominated candidates for the Wardmote, and those who

might be elected Common Council men, constables, street scavengers and quest men.

The freeman also had the right of voting at the Wardmote for the Common Councilmen or even occasionally for an alderman ; but he would have found that in some mysterious way the men who had been proposed by the governing clique always got in, however unpopular or unsuitable they might seem to be.

Besides this secret system of influence the most unblushing bribery seems to have been practised, if we may judge from the following extracts from the *Tatler* :

“Whereas an evil and pernicious custom has of late very much prevailed at the election of Aldermen for the City by treating at taverns and alehouses, thereby engaging many inwardly to give their votes ; which practice appearing to Sir Arthur de Bradly to be of dangerous consequences to the freedom of elections, he hath avoided the excess thereof. Nevertheless, to make acknowledgement to this ward of their intended favour he hath deposited in the hands of Mr. —, one of the present Common Council, £450 to be disposed of as follows, provided the said Sir Arthur de Bradly be the Alderman, viz. :

“All such that shall poll for Sir Arthur de Bradly shall have one chaldron of good coal gratis, and half a chaldron to everyone that shall not poll against him, and the remainder to be laid out in a clock dial or otherwise, as the Common Council men of the said Ward shall think fit. And if any person shall refuse to take the said coals to himself he may assign the same to any poor electors in the Ward. N.B. Whereas several persons have already engaged to poll for Sir Humphrey Greenhat, it is hereby farther declared that every such person as doth poll for Sir Arthur de Bradly shall each of them receive a chaldron of coals gratis.”

“This,” says the *Tatler*, “is certainly the most plain dealing that ever was used.”

To return to the Wardmote, and to the duties of the citizen who attended it. He could be elected on to the Inquest Jury and so avoid serving as constable or night-watchman, both thoroughly unpopular duties.

## THE INQUEST JURY

The Inquest Jury, we are told, "are not to try any matter ; but only to make presentments, which are carried before the Mayor." The Questmen, as the members of this jury were called, were glorified inspectors of nuisances.

According to the Articles of the Charge of the Wardmote Inquest, which had first been drawn up in 1641, and were still its standing orders, the Questmen were enjoined

"to inquire if any person keep any bawdy house, gaming house, or other house of ill fame, or victualling house, or sell beer without a licence. Also if any freeman against his oath made conceal, cover or colour the goods of foreigners by which the King may in anywise lose or the fortunes of the City be emblemished. Also, if any officer, by colour of his office, do extortion to any man. Also, if any man do encroach or take of the common ground of the City. Also if any common way or common course of water be foreclosed or letted that it may not have its course as it was wont, to the annoyance of the Ward, and by whom it is done.

"Ye shall diligently make search and inquiry whether there be any vintner inn holder, alehouse keeper, or any other person or persons whatever in this ward that do use or keep in his, her or their house or houses any measures which be unsealed and by law not allowed, to sell wine, beer, ale or other liquors thereby, and whether any of them do sell any goods, wares and merchandises by false scales, weights and measures."

In the eighteenth century the chief business of the Inquest was to enquire into these matters of freedom and licences, weights and measures.

The Questmen would be summoned by the Beadle to attend at the Quest House of the Ward, or failing this at some convenient tavern, at a date or dates during the month of December.

All the licensed victuallers in the Ward would be called upon to appear before the Inquest and to produce their freedoms and their licences. These licences were almost always renewed as a matter of course. The formal business ended, the gentlemen of the Inquest set out in procession clad

in black gowns, accompanied by the Beadle in his fine uniform. They went round the Ward while the bells of neighbouring churches rang, and stopped at every shop, inn or tavern, ordering the inhabitants to bring forth their weights and measures. The inspection of these was often a pure farce. The shopkeeper produced his rule or measure; but he did not say, though the Questman probably guessed, that under the counter or on a shelf in the bar parlour were the weights and measures that were used in everyday business.

In the early years of the century the Inquest inspected nuisances, made orders concerning repair to pavements and forbade men to trade who were not freemen of the city.

“They detect very few people in their faults,” we are told, “for they honestly take care not to injure their neighbours but inform them when they shall walk their rounds, that they may remove their false weights and measures out of the way. . . . They have a groat a house from each inhabitant besides their fines with which they feast their ingurgitating stomachs with luxurious excesses.”

The Questmen of the Ward of Cheap must certainly have had a fine feast when they spent £52 9s. on a vintner's bill, £5 on ale, £5 3s. 6d. for sugar and spice and £3 19s. 6d. to “the coffee man.”

It was usual “to invite the inhabitants of the several Precincts to breakfast, who with the Council men generally came, and were plentifully entertained in good order to their great satisfaction.”

Another duty of the Ward Inquest was to collect the poor rates, and they held a meeting at least once a year at which they distributed alms to the indigent of the Ward. They had the further important duty of appointing the grand juries and petty juries for the Lord Mayor's Court and the Sheriff's Courts.

As the eighteenth century advanced, the executive power of these inquest juries declined and their place was taken more and more by the Common Council of the Ward. This was a body of from four to sixteen men elected by the Ward, and presided over by an Alderman.

## THE COMMON COUNCIL

When the lighting of the City streets passed out of the hands of private householders, it was to the Common Councils and Aldermen that Parliament entrusted it.

Gradually the licensing of inns and taverns passed also into their hands, and they made arrangements for the provision of night-watchmen and for the cleaning of the streets. They held many more meetings than the Inquest; but followed its example in having a dinner or supper at the public expense.

The Common Council of the Ward was probably even more corrupt than the Inquest. It met in camera, and decided what it should do in its own small secret conclave, while the Inquest had perambulated the streets with pomp and beables and had made their presentments in open court. The authority of the Common Council of the Ward was, however, short-lived.

The state of the City became a crying scandal, and it was asked why Westminster should be comparatively clean, well lighted and provided with fine new freestone pavements, when the City had dark filthy streets full of holes and nuisances. The answer to this was, that the many petty authorities of these wards with their little Common Councils made any concerted action impossible and that the system encouraged bribery and corruption. By the end of the century the business of paving, lighting, scavenging and policing the streets was taken out of the hands of the Wards and given to the Common Council of the municipality, which with the help of the Court of Sewers, of which we shall presently speak, effected immense improvements in the paving, lighting and cleaning of the City streets.

Little was left to the Common Councils of the Wards, beyond the assessment and collection of rates, some influence in the granting of licences and the making of small appointments.

These changes were not effected without protests from the various authorities. The clamour that they raised might have been longer and louder, but for a change in City life, which had its effect on the politics of the municipality.

## THE GOVERNMENT OF LONDON

Early in the century the rich merchant had begun to ape his betters and take houses in Hatton Garden or Bloomsbury ; by the end of our period nearly every prosperous shopkeeper lived outside the City boundaries or had his little box at Clapham or Hammersmith to which he retreated for the week-end. His concern in Ward politics decreased, and changes were made that his fathers, who had all their interests in the City, would never have tolerated. If he were concerned in City affairs the ambition of the prosperous tradesman would have been centred in the Court of Common Hall, which elected the Lord Mayor and various other City officials, and chose four members to represent City interests in the House of Commons.

All freemen claimed the right to be present in Common Hall for the election of the Lord Mayor, the Sheriffs, and such persons as City Auditors and Ale Connors. They thronged into the Guildhall, a turbulent, noisy crowd, and it was said that "numbers of people that have no right to vote break in with noise and violence upon the legal electors and poll in their own or borrowed names."

It was difficult to exclude them, though an Act had been passed limiting the right of voting to liverymen. At length the authorities issued an edict that, in future, liverymen must attend "in their gowns and hoods, according to the ancient custom," and in 1774 they spent £123 in erecting a kind of fence across the Guildhall Yard. This division had thirty-five different doors, which were guarded by the beadles of the different companies and through these the liverymen passed in single file. One door was reserved for the Lord Mayor and Aldermen, who had a right to be present.

Though the electors of the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs had to be liverymen, one of the Sheriffs, according to ancient custom, was always a simple freeman. Usually the high officials succeeded each other in order of seniority, but there were occasions when a candidate was thrown out, because he was thought to favour some unpopular cause.

It was Common Hall which condemned the Convention



with Spain in 1739, which was furious at the attempt to arrest John Wilkes on a general warrant within the confines of the City, which refused to raise contributions for the American War. Common Hall was, in fact, the City's mouthpiece, but it had no executive power. This was vested in the Court of Common Council and in the Court of Aldermen.

The Court of Common Council was, as we have said, elected by the Precincts or the Wardmotes. It had a fine democratic flavour, and included shopkeepers and master-craftsmen, and perhaps an occasional lawyer or apothecary. It had indeed been found necessary to forbid the election by the Wardmotes of anyone who had "been convicted of defrauding in weights and measures, or such like crimes, or any person who has compounded through inability to pay his debts."

It was seldom that one of the many wealthy merchants, bankers or shipowners was elected on to the Common Council, or would have condescended to serve cheek by jowl with costermongers, plumbers and bricklayers.

The Court of Common Council claimed to be supreme in its own court and to have the right to decide who were its properly qualified electors. They would even ignore the opinion of the Alderman, who had the right to sit with them.

In the early days of the century the Common Council was Tory and High Church, with enthusiasms for Dr. Sacheverell and the exiled Stuarts. They represented the ordinary opinion of the lower middle classes in the City. The Aldermen, on the other hand, supported the Whig Ministers of the Crown and the great families who had brought over William of Orange.

Owing to aldermanic influence a Bill was passed in 1726 whereby the powers of the Common Council were much curtailed, and their resolutions were only valid when a majority of the Aldermen concurred.

Common Councillors chafed under these restrictions which rendered their authority entirely nugatory. It was useless to hold meetings, indeed months often elapsed without the

Council being assembled. All the time, however, its members urged in Precinct and at Wardmote that Aldermen should be elected who were pledged to repeal the hated statute.

The rebellion of 1745 changed the Tory Council as it changed the majority of the Tory trading classes. The King was not popular in the City. He would not spend money; why, his footmen's liveries were threadbare; but he was a bulwark against revolution, the Pope, bonfires at Smithfield, and other unknown and horrible evils. The Common Council turned its coat and became Whig.

In 1746, again owing to pressure from the Aldermen, the hated negative was repealed and the Common Council regained its own freedom. It often used its new powers in conjunction with the Aldermen to harry and annoy the King's Ministers. It presented petitions and remonstrances sometimes couched in quite insolent language; it instructed the City members to oppose Government Bills, and to keep a wary eye upon any attempt to undermine liberty or increase the kingly power. Its authority became very great, and its work enormously increased.

The paving, lighting, draining and cleaning of the City was an immense work, and numerous committees undertook such matters as the building and re-building of bridges, docks and prisons, the enlarging of the markets, and the erection of a Mansion House for the Lord Mayor.

These committees and sub-committees had their own rules and standing orders of a most elaborate nature, and their own system of checking expenditure and preventing any misappropriation of public money. The members might expect their perquisites, their banquets and fees for attending meetings, but they saw that no outsiders batted upon public funds.

Compared with the Common Council, the Council of Aldermen seemed dull and lethargic, largely composed of old fat men, who did not want to do very much, and would gladly leave initiative and legislation to their lesser brethren.

Outside the City of London the authority of Wardmote

and Common Council did not extend. Here the centre of government was the parish Vestry or in some few cases the Manor.

The parish Vestry might be of two kinds. There was the close Vestry more often to be found in the country, though there were some examples of it in London, and the open Vestry. The close or select Vestry was an assembly of freeholders who held their positions for life, and co-opted others whenever they considered it necessary. The open Vestry, when it had not degenerated into a turbulent mob, was one of the most democratic assemblies to be found anywhere in eighteenth-century Europe outside Russia.

The close Vestries were variously constituted. Some had been close Vestries from time immemorial, others had been constituted by a local act or by bishop's faculty. The members of this body were sometimes called "the gentlemen," or "the company of the four-and-twenty," "the ancients" or "the elders," or more appropriately, "the masters of the parish," for this was indeed what they were.

There were close Vestries at Bethnal Green, Lambeth, St. Anne's Soho, St. Margaret's Westminster, St. Martin's in the Fields, St. James's Piccadilly, and in several other parishes.

In the new parishes which were constituted on the outskirts of the metropolis the Vestry was generally a closed one. In the City the Vestries were nearly always closed, and their authority was almost nominal for the Wardmote and Common Council as we have seen governed City life.

The Vestry might concern itself with such matters as the levying of a church rate, the choosing of churchwardens, and the allocation of the charities of the parish.

Outside the City indeed the close Vestry had often little real power.

Turnpike trusts looked after the roads, or neglected them as the case might be, and street commissioners saw to the lighting, paving and policing of the district. There were exceptions. The close Vestries of some Westminster parishes

## THE GOVERNMENT OF LONDON

and those of Marylebone and St. Pancras were extremely active.

The Vestry of St. Martin's in the Fields took upon itself magisterial powers. It gave

"notice to the Justices," we read, "and ordered them to attend when there is to be a day of appeal, but that the Vestry attend it likewise and the business is done in a Vestry; that the Justices give a sanction to it, but that they were mere cyphers, and that the Vestry govern and manage all these matters."

The close Vestries to which Members of Parliament and other distinguished persons often belonged, were able to get Bills through Parliament, granting additional powers to their own little assemblies.

The close Vestry of the parish of Marylebone, thanks to separate Acts of Parliament passed in its favour, ruled autocratically for years, published no accounts, and eventually piled up a parish debt of about a quarter of a million.

"Select Vestries," it was said, "are select companies of rogues." Undoubtedly the select Vestryman too often lived on perquisites and speculation and the most abominable graft and bribery.

Here and there some strong-willed and public-spirited man drove his Vestry along the paths of honesty and rectitude. Thus Sir Robert Taylor, who "became a member of the Vestry of St. Martin's in the Fields in 1773," insisted that parish contracts should not be given to Vestrymen, that their Gargantuan feasts should not be paid for out of parish funds, and that the licensing laws should be well and truly observed.

Too often, however, when one man ruled a Vestry, whether open or closed, he used his powers to amass wealth and put it into his own coffers.

Thus Joseph Merceron of Bethnal Green <sup>formed</sup> "a sort of republic within the parish" which was made up of Mr. Merceron and a few of his friends. This gentleman had got himself chosen permanent treasurer to the parochial funds,

and put his supporters into all the parish offices. His tenants and sympathisers obtained all the parish contracts, had their licences renewed however abominably their taverns might be conducted, and even got their assessments substantially reduced.

It was not until the following century after about fifty years of maladministration that the efforts of a public-spirited rector succeeded in dethroning the tyrant, who was eventually sent to gaol for peculation.

The open Vestry, as we have said, could be the most democratic assembly. All the inhabitants of the parish had a right to attend it. This word inhabitant could, however, be variously interpreted. In some parishes everyone considered that he or even she could attend the Vestry meeting, but usually this right was confined to ratepayers, and sometimes only to those whose rates were above a specified amount.

As may be supposed, when so many persons could push themselves into a Vestry meeting it often degenerated into a free fight or at the best into a shouting, turbulent mob. There were open Vestries, however, that were admirably conducted, and might have been models to other legislative bodies in the way they managed the affairs of their little kingdoms.

When the Vestry met at Eastertide its first duty would be to elect the parish officers. These were the Churchwardens, the Constable, the Surveyor of the Highways and the Overseer of the Poor.

The office of churchwarden was one of distinction, and there was no difficulty in finding men to act in this capacity. Churchwardens were responsible for the repair and upkeep of the church. They were required to see that all things were provided that were necessary for public worship, and to report to the Archdeacon whether the services were properly conducted, and whether the parishioners went to church and lived honestly.

All these officials, whom we are considering, were unpaid, and though the churchwardens might be very willing to take

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office, the Constable, the Surveyor and the Overseer tried to evade their onerous duties if they could.

The Constable of the parish had many of the duties of the present police. He would execute magistrates' warrants, apprehend prisoners and attend at the courts. He was usually chosen by "house row" rotation as it was called, and of all the unpaid officials his work was probably the hardest and most disagreeable. A kindly, good-natured man shrank from embroiling himself with his neighbours, a bolder and more unscrupulous fellow made a fine income by overlooking their delinquencies. Nearly every parish found it necessary to supplement their constables by a posse of paid officials known as the Watch.

The Overseers of the Poor also had an unpleasant task. Besides distributing parish relief, they were charged with the task of removing paupers to their original places of settlement, obtaining affiliation orders and apprenticing destitute children.

It is amazing the pains and money parishes would spend in ousting paupers and such as might become chargeable, from their confines. The courts had a steady stream of cases concerned with parish settlements. A well-known rhyme described a case which had come up from Mr. Justice Pratt to a higher court :

A woman having a settlement  
Married a man with none ,  
He flies and leaves her destitute  
What then is to be done ?  
Quoth Ryder, the chief Justice,  
In spite of Sir John Pratt,  
You'll send her to the parish  
In which she was a brat.

The more successful an overseer might be in shifting paupers out of the parishes and reducing the scales of relief the more popular he was likely to be among the ratepayers. The poor man certainly had a remedy. He could go to the nearest justice and complain, and magistrates had the power to reverse the decisions and order relief on any scale they

## THE TYBURN TICKET

thought fit. In the case of independent country justices the pauper often obtained redress, and we read angry remonstrances from magistrates concerning inadequate relief.

In London, it is to be feared that magistrates, if not venal as so many of them were, lacked the personal knowledge and sympathy to decide between the Overseer and the complainant.

The last of the parish officials, the Surveyor of the highways, or the Waywarden as he was sometimes called, was chosen by the Justices from a list of names sent in by the Vestry. In London, where there were turnpike trusts and street commissioners, the Surveyor of the highway had very little to do.

These parish offices were usually most unpopular, and the men who sought them often had an axe to grind.

Men of any position were exempt. No peers, ministers of religion, Members of Parliament, barristers, attorneys, Justices of the Peace, apothecaries or officers in the army or navy were obliged to serve. There were, moreover, other ways of avoiding service. Those elected might pay fines to the Vestry or obtain substitutes.

There was also the Tyburn ticket. This was a certificate showing that the holder of it had prosecuted a felon who was afterwards convicted and for this meritorious service was exempt. These Tyburn tickets were marketable, and were often sold for large sums.

Besides the unpaid parochial officials a certain number of salaried officials were chosen.

There were the Parish and Vestry Clerks, sometimes one and the same person, a Scavenger or Town's Husband as he was often called, an Ale Connor to examine beer and ale sold in the parish and report upon its quality, a Bellman or Town Crier, and a Beadman or Beadle, who was often the Constable's assistant. The Vestry sometimes chose the Organist and Bellows' Blower, though these posts were generally filled by the incumbent's nominee. In some London parishes the Vestry would also appoint a Minister called the Lecturer or

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Afternoon Preacher, who took Evensong in the church on Sundays.

The officials and servants of the parish having been chosen the Vestry turned its attention to such matters as levying church rate and assessment. Curiously enough this rate had never been authorised by the legislature except for a brief period during the Commonwealth, and yet such is the force of immemorial custom, the man who refused to pay it would certainly have been served with a distress warrant, and possibly sent to gaol.

Another authority which exercised some jurisdiction in London was known as the Court of Sewers. Large tracts of England were still in the eighteenth century "huge great vast fens and marshes," and the draining of these, the protection of sea coasts and river banks were in the hands of the Commissioners of Sewers.

These Commissioners were usually the landed proprietors of a district. It was their business to empanel a jury, which decided on any case brought before it, and could very often take proceedings against offenders. In London there were Courts of Sewers for Westminster, Holborn and Finsbury.

The Commissioners of Westminster were originally the King's servants, and Sir Christopher Wren had been one of them. They had to supervise, not only the streets of Westminster and the adjacent river bank, but their jurisdiction extended far beyond the "morass of Milbank" to the swampy fields of Fulham and Hammersmith.

The power of the metropolitan Courts of Sewers was, however, limited compared with that of the Commissioners and juries in many rural areas. They could not fine those whose neglect was causing damage or even assess persons who might be liable. The actual work was generally done by small committees of commissioners or Vestrymen, and was attended with the usual graft and corruption, which, as we have seen, so often characterised the local government of London.

From very early times in England till the middle of the



## MANORIAL COURTS

seventeenth century, much authority had been vested in the Manor. The Lord lived in his Manor House, owning his own land, and having his demesne in the meadows and common fields. His tenants had their lands from him and paid him usually in kind and labour. There were Manor Courts presided over by the Lord's Steward in which various petty offences were tried, and men were indicted for bad husbandry, removing of landmarks or filching wood from the Lord's demesne.

It may seem that such an innately rural form of government could have no place in London; but we find the Crown owning the manorial rights of the Precinct of the Savoy. Here every year the Steward summoned the Court Leet. They appointed burgesses, constables, ale connors and two flesh tasters, and apparently their officials did their work well.

The jury of the Court were constantly fining men for using false weights, for keeping disorderly houses, obstructing the streets and neglecting essential house repairs. They fined the Keeper of the Savoy Prison for ill-treating the military prisoners who were confined therein and remonstrated with the proprietor of Exeter Change for "keeping a tiger carelessly secured in a shed on Savoy Hill to the great alarm of the neighbours." They were constantly presenting the Commissioners of Sewers and the Commissioners of the Pavements for gross neglect.

The Liberty of the Tower had also its Manor Court, but its authority seems to have died away early in the century.

Westminster had been the Manor of the Abbot and Convent of Westminster. The authority of the Manor Court, however, being insufficient for the government of an ever-increasing City, it was reinforced in the reign of Elizabeth by an Act conferring authority on a Court of Burgesses who were empowered to "do and deal in everything and things as Aldermen's deputies in the City of London, lawfully do or may do."

By the beginning of the eighteenth century the authority of this Court had been much diminished. It still nominated

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the Constables and hired the Beadles, who assisted in policing the streets ; and it collected the fines which men paid in order to escape this detested service ; but the powerful close Vestries of Westminster and the Justices had, between them, usurped many of the powers of the Court of Burgesses, and of the Manor Court. The former still met with all the trappings of pomp and circumstance.

“The Deputy Steward,” we are told, “Burgesses and Assistants, High Constable and Clerk met in court between the hours of ten and eleven in the forenoon, where after they had put on their gowns they went (all the Beadles belonging to the several wards going before them with their silver-headed staves) to the Deanery of Westminster, where when they came, they were immediately admitted into his Lordship’s presence in the Jerusalem Chamber, whereupon his Lordship with his attendants, and the whole court following him, went to the Court House.”

The Leet Court was also held on other occasions, and transacted various business such as poor relief, the licensing of porters who plied for hire “at the wharves and piers of Westminster and the waits who played in the streets.”

In the early years of the century the Court Leet also settled the Assize of Bread. The latter was established as early as the thirteenth century and continued in London as late as the year 1822. At it the magistrates were empowered to fix the price of bread in accordance with the cost of wheat, and also to examine into its weight and quality.

When writing of his hero, John Gilpin, Cowper says, “a trained band captain bold was he of famous London town.” By an Act of 1662 the trained bands had been demolished or merged in the militia, always excepting the trained bands of London which existed until 1794, when they were reorganised and called the City of London Militia. This force was entirely a municipal army, as distinct from the ordinary soldiers who were essentially the King’s troops. Like the territorials of the present day, the trained bands had their marches and parades, and spent at least fourteen days in

training. Their expenses were paid for by the City. Their members were usually chosen by lot, and if they did not choose to serve they had to find a substitute or pay a fine of ten pounds. They could not be sent abroad, but were liable to be called up if the country were invaded or if there were a state of national emergency. When Prince Charlie was at Derby, the trained bands paraded London streets, and the Royal Exchange was turned into barracks for them. We do not hear that their presence there did much to reassure the frightened citizens. In fact, so inefficient were they, that their force was entirely reorganised a few years later. It was then proposed that the new militia should be exercised on Sunday. There was a loud outcry from the nonconformists and Lord Hardwicke declared in the House of Commons that

“if this institution should be established by a law I will venture to foretell that, notwithstanding the injunction to go to church, it will be a constant fair and scene of jollity in the several parishes, where these exercises are kept, and the face of religion will be abolished in this country.”

By that time there were six regiments of trained bands, the blue regiment, the green, the yellow, the white, the red and the orange, numbering altogether nearly a thousand men. There was, beside, the Honourable Artillery Company, which had a force of three hundred and often provided officers for the trained bands.

With so many authorities, often conflicting with each other, and frequently extremely venal, it is not surprising that London was as badly organised and as full of danger and violence as we know it to have been. What may astonish us is that foreigners often commented upon the amenities of the great city and its comparative freedom from crime. To what horrible conditions were they accustomed in their own countries?

## TRADE

THE growth of trade in London during the eighteenth century was enormous. We are referring now to exports and imports and the distributive trades. Manufactures had, for the most part, gone to the Midlands, attracted by cheap coal. There were in London the framework knitters and the silk weavers of Spitalfields, and china and pottery works were carried on at Chelsea, Bow and Lambeth. There were coachmakers in Long Acre and a few who specialised in furniture; but it was not a manufacturing city.

The principal trade was undertaken by companies which had been founded in the seventeenth century. There was the East India Company and other associations which traded in Russia, Africa, the Levant and Hudson Bay. The South Sea Company, in spite of the crash early in the century, carried on its business, and there was the nefarious Slave Trade. In 1733 a subscription was raised in London to promote the colonisation of Georgia under General Oglethorpe. Those prisoners for debt, who were fit and willing to go, were provided, by their supporters, with seeds, vines, mulberry trees, and everything necessary for making wine and silk. After the termination of the war with Spain, England was permitted to trade with that country, though the South Sea Company lost its right to send one ship each year to the Spanish-American ports. In 1730 there were 1,417 vessels belonging to the Port of London. Their gross tonnage was reckoned at 178,557 and many of them were very small. Little ships of 20 tons would make the most amazing voyages. In Capper's "Port and Trade of London" export figures are given for the year 1730. The chief commodities were woollens, cloths, druggets and serges, flannels, cottons and calicoes, tobacco

and hose. Forty-seven gold watches were sent abroad and one hundred and thirteen silver ones, and over two thousand hats. The chief imports were large quantities of wine, brandy and rum, indigo, sugar, silk, coffee, tea and Holland cloth or linen. The war with the American colonies was most disastrous to British trade. In 1778, 733 cargo boats were lost; but Admiral Keppel's victory off Brest enabled the English merchant fleet to set forth again, and many a ship took out letters of marque and went forth as a privateer to harry the French. In 1779, in spite of the war, cargoes worth £70,000,000 were entering the Pool, and London possessed about one-third of the whole trade of the Empire.

Trade, retail as well as wholesale, increased enormously during the eighteenth century, though the Government was not always wise in the measures which it took. The cotton trade was almost killed when a Bill was passed in 1720, forbidding any printed, painted, stained or dyed calico to be sold. On the other hand no buttons of cloth, serge, drugget, freize, camlet or any other stuffs were allowed to be made, and poor people fastened their coats with hooks and eyes. The Act which made it illegal to be buried in anything but woollen was repealed in 1757, in which year Dyer wrote his tedious poem about English wool, which was called the Fleece. It was said of him that when he died, he, at all events, would still be buried in woollen. In 1785, Pitt actually put a tax upon retail shops. There was consternation in the City, and a committee of shopkeepers awaited upon the Minister. He told them airily that the only remedy he could suggest was to raise their prices and make the customer pay.

The London shops of the eighteenth century would now be considered very poor indeed. Their fine fronts may be seen in our museums, and we look at old pictures of Cheap-side and regret its vanished beauty. Inside, the shops, to our ideas, were small, dark and pokey, though our ancestors admired them, and visiting foreigners declared that they were far finer than anything which they had in their own

countries. At night a dozen candles in the window made a wonderful illumination.

Trades were inclined to keep in the same neighbourhoods. The coachmakers lived in Long Acre, the mercers and drapers in Cheapside, Ludgate Hill and Gracechurch Street. There were orange merchants and wet salters about Billingsgate, fishmongers on Fish Street Hill, seamstresses in Paternoster Row, chairmakers in St. Paul's Churchyard, booksellers in Little Britain. Barbers' shops were everywhere for wigs, powdered hair and shaven faces called for constant attention. They were even open on Sunday mornings and the barber kept his customers' Sunday wigs, powdered and curled in band-boxes, ready for them to put on. On weekday mornings the flying barber might have been seen rushing through the street with his razors and soap and his jug of hot water. Few men cared to shave themselves with cut-throat razors, held possibly in unsteady hands.

The shop assistants were generally possessed of good manners and an almost endless patience.

"The shops," we read, "are perfect gilded theatres, the variety of wrought silks, so many changes of fine scenes, and the mercers are the performers in the opera; and instead of *vivitur ingenio*, you have in gold capitals, 'No trust by retail.' They are the sweetest, fairest, nicest, dished-out creatures; and by their elegant address and soft speeches you would guess them to be Italian. As people glance within the doors, they salute them with 'garden silk, ladies, Italian silk, very fine Mantua silks; any right Geneva velvet, English velvet, velvet embossed?' And to the meaner sort, 'fine thread satins, both striped and plain, fine mohair silks, silks, satinettes, burdets, persianets, Norwich crêpes, anterines, silks for hoods and scarves, hair camlets, dreggets, sagathies, gentlemen's nightgowns ready made, shalloons, durances, and right Scotch plaids.' We went into a shop, which had three partners, two of them were there to flourish out their silks, and after an obliging smile, and a pretty mouth made Cicero-like to expatiate upon their goodness, and the other's sole business was to be a gentleman usher of the shop, to stand completely dressed at the door, bow to all the coaches that passed by,

and hand ladies out and in. We saw abundance of gay fancies, fit for sea captains' wives, sheriffs' feasts, and Taunton Dean ladies. 'This, Madam, is wonderful charming. This, Madam, is so diverting a silk. This, Madam, my stars how cool it looks! But this, Madam, ye Gods, would I had ten thousand yards of it!' Then gathers up a sleeve and places it to our shoulders. 'It suits your ladyship's face wonderfully well.' When we had pleased ourselves, and bid him ten shillings a yard for what he asked fifteen, 'Fan me ye winds, your ladyship rallies me! Should I part with it at such a price, the weavers would rise upon the very shop. Was you at the Park last night, Madam? Your ladyship shall abate me sixpence. Have you read the *Tatler* to-day?' These fellows are positively the greatest fops in the Kingdom."<sup>1</sup>

This bargaining seems to have been usual in most shops, particularly in those frequented by women. Mandeville, in his "Fable of the Bees," gives a long account of "the Conversation of a Spruce Mercer and a young Lady his Customer that comes to his Shop." In the end, after much cajolery on the one side and flattery on the other,

"the upshot is, that with the satisfaction of having saved 9*d.* per yard, she has bought her silk at the same price as anybody else might have done, and often gives 6*d.* more than—rather than not have sold it—he would have taken."

There were, of course, none of those vast emporiums which we see on all sides. The shoemaker stuck to his last and did not spread himself out into haberdashery and hose. There were, it is said, one hundred and seventy-five different kinds of shops in London. No great factories turned out quantities of clothes, shoes, silver goods, watches and every conceivable article. Whenever possible the goods were made by apprentices and journeymen behind the shop and under the superintendence of the master. In trades where this could not be done, the shopkeeper waited for the bagman to call with his samples. These travellers brought linen, silk and cloths and exquisite models of furniture, the tiny cup-

boards and chests, which now delight collectors. They brought miniature silver tea and coffee pots, tiny samples of china and pottery, and many other things. A large amount of cloth from many parts of England was sold each year at Blackwell Hall in the City, and from this centre, agents rode out to all parts of England with strings of pack-horses bearing cloth, serge, drugget, freize and other woollen goods. They would go all over England, selling their wares, and others would attend Stourbridge and various large fairs which in many instances took the places of the wholesale houses. The grocer and provision merchant went out into the country to buy some of his goods ; as far afield as Warwick, Gloucester and Ipswich for butter and cheese. The poulterer had geese and turkeys driven up to him from Norfolk, and some City fishmongers got salmon and other fish fresh from the Thames. There were also the markets. An enormous area round London was laid out in market gardens and sent fruit and vegetables to Covent Garden. It was calculated, at the end of the century, that the market had a turnover of three millions, and was making a profit of two hundred per cent. Leadenhall Market, which still had its fifteenth-century buildings, sold meat and leather, Colchester baize and wool. It had also a herb market. The chief commodity, however, was meat. It was, we are told, "the wonder of foreigners, who did not duly consider the carnivorous nation to which it belongs." In the reign of William III an Act had been passed to make Billingsgate "a free market for fish." The market opened at four o'clock on summer mornings and at six o'clock in winter ; but the market was crowded long before this, by the fish salesmen and porters waiting for the arrival of the fishing smacks, and by companies of travellers, who were going down to Gravesend by the hoy which started at three in the morning. The place had an unenviable reputation for foul language, low taverns and the crimps and prostitutes who preyed upon the sailors.

As regards the purity of its food, eighteenth-century London had little to boast. Actually in 1709 the legislature repealed



## LONDON CRIES

the pillory and tumbril Act of Henry III which forbade the adulteration of many foodstuffs. The City Companies were supposed to look after their own trades and to inspect the markets, but their supervision was not very thorough. In 1728 the adulteration of coffee was forbidden and a few years later the "sophistication" of tea became an offence. As was the case with so many other legal enactments in the eighteenth century, very little notice was taken of these laws. Flour and less harmless ingredients were still put into coffee and the cheaper teas had their usual accompaniments of sloe leaves and pieces of stick. On the other hand there was a real pride in craftsmanship, and though *caveat emptor* might have been written above the doors of many shops, the more reputable traders recognised that it paid to sell the best. The people who suffered most from the adulteration of food and drink and the shoddiness of materials were the poor.

Besides the regular tradesman, who had his shop, there was a whole army of street traders, hawkers, pedlars, men who set up booths or barrows by the roadside. Wheatley, in his *London Cries*, has immortalised some of the most picturesque of these. A few itinerant sellers have lingered into our own time. Lavender and watercresses are even now hawked about the streets, and we may hear the bell of the muffin-man. Nobody, however, offers us "Holland socks at four pairs a shilling" or "new brooms for old shoes." That picturesque fellow, who went about with a barrel on his back and a bunch of quill pens in his hand, selling, "fine writing ink," has long since gone. "Fritters, piping hot fritters," was another cry usually at street corners where women sat frying fritters on a tripod over a fire raised upon bricks. Other women went about selling papers of pins and calling out,

Three rows a penny pins  
Short whites and mid-di-lings.

Another woman rang a bell like our muffin friend and demanded, "Who's for a mutton-pie or a Christmas-pie?" Then there was the Flying Pieman who ran about Hatton

Garden and Fleet Market between twelve and four. His most popular wares were pieces of baked plum-pudding. "Buy, buy, buy," he would call as he ran in and out among the traffic, "a piece for a penny." It was said that even Common Council men would stop and taste his provisions. The "Buy-a-broom" girls came from the Netherlands and were to be seen in London streets during the spring months selling their wares. They wore their quaint national dress. Then there was the cherry woman with her "sixpence a pound fair cherries," and the man who sold hobby-horses and who went about blowing on a trumpet or shouting his cry, "troop everyone."

The streets of London must have presented a very gay and animated appearance, and if they have gained in comfort and cleanliness, they have also lost much of the moving picture of life.

The great advertisement nuisance was in its infancy in the eighteenth century. A few shopkeepers sent out oddly dressed men with sandwich boards, but on the whole this was considered as more befitting the quack doctor and the mountebank. Reputable tradesmen relied chiefly on the newspapers as a means for advertising. They also sent out elaborate and often beautiful trade cards. A delightful one is reproduced in the *Verney Memoirs*, which is surmounted by a rampant lion. It belonged to one, William Creswell, whom we, in our modern parlance, should term a chemist. He, more accurately, described himself as a druggist. "William Creswell, Druggist, of the Blew Lyon in Newgate Street, sells all Sorts of Druggs, with Coffee, Tea, Chocolate, Cocoonut, Sago, Salop, German-Spaw-Water and Snuff of all Sorts at Reasonable Rates."

The banking system had been gradually consolidating itself during the eighteenth century. The Bank of England was founded in 1694, and was largely the consequence of the speculative ventures of the London goldsmiths and the extortionate interest which they charged. The Government received from the promoters the sum of £1,200,000 at a rate



*Cries of London: Sweet China Oranges, from the painting by F. Wheatley*



of 8 per cent., and in addition, four thousand a year for expenses. In return, the Corporation was allowed to deal in bills of exchange or bullion and to issue notes equal to its capital. In 1706, the bank's charter, which had only been granted for a few years, expired, and a new arrangement was inaugurated. The Government now paid an interest of 6 per cent. and was in receipt of a new loan of £400,000. The bank was empowered to double its capital and consequently its issue of notes. In 1742, when the charter again expired, the capital was raised to £9,800,000. The bank had its vicissitudes. When the South Sea Company at the height of its prosperity offered to take over the National Debt at an interest of 5 per cent., and to pay five millions for the privilege, the Bank of England rushed in with an offer of seven and a half millions. Fortunately for them, their offer was rejected ; but they had not heard the last of the South Sea Company. When that venture crashed and dozens of others crashed with it, there was a surging mob in Threadneedle Street. The bank, it was said, paid its cheques in sixpences. No doubt its cashiers were as dilatory as they could be, but the Mint could not have coined the number of sixpences which would have been required. Then, and in 1745, when Prince Charles Edward was at Derby and there was another run on the bank, the London merchants came to its assistance with large loans. They realised what an immense benefit a National Bank was to the trade of the country. At the end of the century the Bank of England was circulating nearly £9,000,000 in banknotes and between one and two millions in bullion. Until the close of the seventeenth century the goldsmiths had been the bankers. Robert Blanchard, for instance, started business about the middle of the century at the Marigold by Temple Bar. He took his stepson, Francis Child, into the business which was to be known as Child's Bank. At the end of the eighteenth century there were about seventy private banks in London, and nearly four hundred in the country towns. They were all small, indeed no private bank could be owned by more than six persons, and they all issued their own notes. This circulation

of paper was an immense boon to the traders and indeed to the community. In early days, when notes were regarded with suspicion, the trader went abroad with a large leather bag full of coin, the gentleman who wished to complete some financial transaction brought a servant with him, similarly burdened. Travellers by horse or coach carried their wealth in bags or portmanteaux. The risk of theft was very great and the method cumbersome in the extreme. Even when notes came into general use, the shopkeeper was not at the end of his money troubles. The coinage had much deteriorated and there was often very little of it. All sorts of foreign coins circulated, particularly Spanish dollars, some of which actually had the head of George III superimposed upon them. These foreign coins were usually part of the prize money of enemy ships taken by British vessels. An immense amount of bad money circulated and tradesmen had to be continually on their guard, as much of it was excellently counterfeited. There was also an almost perennial shortage of small change. Many shops issued token money. These were coins which could only be spent in the shop that issued them. This, at least, was the general rule; but some shopkeepers were obliging and would take their neighbour's tokens. They kept a wooden tray or box with divisions, into which the various tokens were put. The tradesman in a large way of business usually carried it on with books, ledgers, and a banking account something in the same way as at present. There were, however, hosts of smaller men, who had never even learnt to read or write. Instead of written accounts, they cut notches in sticks, put up chalk marks on doors and trusted to a very excellent memory. They disliked banks, and would not have known how to manage an account. Their money they kept in teapots or stockings, or sewn up in feather beds. Robbery was common; but a man trusted to his good blunderbus and the cudgels of the apprentices who slept under the counter.

## POLITICS

THERE was probably no period in English history when men knew so little about politics, and cared so much for them. We are alluding to the common man. The politician was generally in the business for the good of his estate, and supported the party from whom he hoped to get the most. "Tories," Horace Walpole thought, "were Whigs when they got places."

He was a bitter commentator upon other men's foibles; but he and his family made a very good thing out of the country. His eldest brother had been appointed Auditor of the Exchequer, his second brother Clerk of the Pells, while he himself was Clerk of the Estreats, when still at Eton, and Usher of the Exchequer as an undergraduate. He divided the profits on the Collectorship of Customs with his brother, and the two between them got about a quarter of a million. His father, Robert Walpole, had looked after the family very well.

"These men have their price," he had observed, casting his appraising eye over a venal House of Commons, and he sometimes brought it with him in his pocket. On one occasion he thrust a bank bill for £2,000 into the hand of a member of the opposition, mentioning the fact that he would like his vote on a certain measure.

"Sir Robert," said the member, "you have lately served some of my particular friends, and when my wife was last at Court the King was very gracious to her, which must have happened at your instance. I should therefore, think myself very ungrateful, if I were to refuse the favour you are now pleased to ask me."

And the bank bill went into his capacious pocket. At

ministerial dinners, the guests shifted their plates with care and hope. Five-pound notes had been found beneath them. It must in fairness be admitted, however, that there were men whose opinions were not to be bought. Shippen, the Jacobite, returned the thousand pounds which the Prince of Wales had sent him ; but Shippen was no greedy place man. Bribes were not always in money, but in some place, pension or perquisite, which few men would have had the slightest scruple in accepting. State loans could be bought by Government supporters at par, and re-sold in the City at a profit. Lottery tickets could be purchased in packets of five hundred, and the nice round sum of two guineas made upon each ticket that was re-sold. Chatham told a startled House of Lords exactly what he thought of their corrupt practices, and that in no measured terms.

“ If any noble lord,” he said, “ challenged me to assert that there is much corruption in both Houses, I should laugh in his face, and tell him he knows it as well as I.”

When the younger Pitt was introducing a Bill to regulate the fees in public offices, he disclosed some strange figures. Lord North was spending £1,300 of the public money in stationery, the Secretary of the Treasury used £340 worth of whipcord, and there was a member of the Board of Trade who attended the levée in a fine suit of green velvet which he had had made out of the material supplied for bags to hold the Board’s papers. Lord Bute’s private secretary declared that the peace which concluded the Seven Years’ War had cost £80,000, this sum having been distributed in bribes to Members of Parliament. When the precincts of the Treasury were to be patrolled by an armed guard after dark, the following rhyme was circulated.

From the night to the morning  
 ’Tis true all is right  
 But who shall secure us  
 From morning till night.

Pitt made a sensation when, in 1784, he gave the Clerkship of the Pells, a sinecure worth £3,000 a year, to Colonel Barré



instead of the pension to which he was entitled. Most Ministers would have put the money into their own pockets ; but Pitt served his country. His fine example and that of his father no doubt did something to foster a more honourable ideal in public life. In 1782, in consequence of the great expense of the war with America, various reforms were carried through. No contractors were allowed to have seats in Parliament, and revenue officers, who had always voted as directed by the Ministry, were disfranchised. Burke's bills to curtail pensions, sinecures, and perquisites pressed hardly upon himself, and he relinquished large sums of money which his predecessors in office had regarded as their own. If the Lords and Commons were, with some honourable exceptions, guilty of bribery and peculation, it is not surprising that other people engaged in it. Since the reign of Charles II, it had been the custom to purchase seats in Parliament, and many a man reckoned the sale of a borough as part of his patrimony. The price given for parliamentary seats began to rise as the country became more wealthy. The Indian nabob returning to England with accumulated wealth from the east, thought he would buy himself a seat in Parliament and so become a country gentleman.

"I spoke to a borough-jobber," says Lord Chesterfield in a letter to his son, "and offered five and twenty hundred pounds for a secure seat in Parliament. But he laughed at my offer, and said there was no such thing as a borough to be had now, for the rich East and West Indians had secured them all, at the rate of three thousand pounds, but many at four thousand, and two or three that he knew, at five thousand."

A seat would sometimes be sold in perpetuity for an enormous sum, but it was more usual to sell the right to sit in the forthcoming parliament.

"I always votes for Mr. Most," said a Honiton elector to Lord Dundonald, and elections sometimes cost as much as £30,000. Constituencies varied enormously in the number of voters. There were Scot and Lot boroughs in which every man who had resided there for six months and paid Scot and

Lot, that is to say, poor rates and church rates, could have a vote. There were also Pot Wolloper boroughs, where the man who owned his own front door and a fireplace for cooking was a voter. On the other hand, there were the boroughs of Galton and Old Sarum, which had four electors, and many a new town which was not represented at all. Voters had often to be brought from great distances. At the time of an election the roads leading into London were crowded with every kind of vehicle, the drivers and occupants being in various stages of intoxication. It was necessary to look after these freeholders very carefully, or they might be kidnapped by the other side, and shut up in a cellar till the election was safely over. A shipload of London freemen, who were being carried to Newcastle to vote at an election, were startled when they awoke next morning at Ostend. The captain of the ship had been heavily bribed to remove them out of harm's way. Even when a man had been elected, the returning officer could, and sometimes did, tamper with the votes.

Hogarth has left us his vivid pictures of an election. First of all we have the entertainment, held in the large parlour of an inn. It is the usual Hogarth picture of coarse, lewd men and women in various stages of drunkenness and repletion. A flag, with the words "Give us back our eleven days," and the slashed portrait of the monarch, mark the date and the politics of the party. The unfortunate candidate, who wears a look of martyred bewilderment, is being kissed by an old woman, while a constituent tries to set fire to his wig and another robs him of his ring. An alderman lies insensible after a surfeit of oysters, while a barber surgeon attempts to bleed him. A parson is still devouring the remains of a haunch of venison, a boy is making punch in a large tub. A plainly dressed man, probably a dissenting tradesman, rejects a bribe, which his wife implores him to accept. From the street outside, the rival party are throwing bricks through the window, and the guests retaliate with such missiles as lie handy. The candidate's coat of arms is painted on the wall behind him, three guineas proper, with the crest of a bawling mouth and the

## ELECTIONS

motto, "Speak and Have." The next picture in the series, which is called "Canvassing for Votes," is less unpleasing; but it treats entirely of country elections. The plate of the polling, though its scene is laid in rural surroundings, shows the hustings, as they might have been set up in any town or city. There is here a crowd of the maimed, the lame and the blind, the drunken and the witless, all crowding up the steps to the polling booth. The candidates sit at the back of the shed, one much agitated, the other resting upon his cane in a state of quiet satisfaction. The lawyers of the opposing candidates scrutinise the voters and object on principle to every man of the opposite party. In the background Britannia's Chariot, with its curious inmates, is being overturned, while the coachman and footmen play at cards upon the box. In the last plate of this series, the unfortunate member is being chaired by his enthusiastic supporters. He is a large, fat man, and seems to be in a most precarious position. His supporters do not look where they are going and the crowd fights and surges around them. A large goose flies over the head of the newly elected member, and at a window near by is a group of the defeated party, one of whom wears a ribbon across his breast and was thought to represent the Duke of Newcastle.

"Men," says Southey, writing of elections, "who at other times regarded it as their first duty to speak the truth, and who thought their honour implicated in their word, scrupled not at asserting the grossest and most impudent falsehoods, if by that means they thought they might obtain a momentary advantage over a rival party."

The London mob, which was by turns Whig and Tory, understood little of the catch phrases, which it shouted with raucous enthusiasm; but it tolerated no opposition. Swift, writing to Stella in 1710, describes how he fell in with "the electors for Parliament men; and the rabble came about our coach crying 'A Colt, A Stanhope!' etc. We were afraid of a dead cat, or our glasses broken and so were always of their side."

One of the most tumultuous of elections was that of Middle-

sex, when Wilkes was standing for Parliament. The town rang with the shouts of "Wilkes and liberty" or "Number Forty-five." This of course referred to Wilkes's celebrated article in the *North Briton* for which he had been arrested on a general warrant, and imprisoned in the Tower. The mob scratched the number on the panels of the coaches, chalked it on house doors, dragged Wilkes's carriage in triumph through the streets and threw brickbats at the magistrates who tried to read the riot act. As early as five o'clock on polling day the roads were thronged with Wilkes's supporters who allowed no one to pass who did not wear blue colours, or shout the name of the popular candidate. When evening came every window had to be illuminated. "Several Scotch refusing," says Walpole, "had their windows broken." Mugs, punch-bowls, and handkerchiefs with the portrait of the hero engraved upon them were sold in all the shops. Underlying the ignorant brutality and turbulence of this election, there was undoubtedly an English love of liberty and fair play. The same sentiments animated many of Fox's supporters in the Westminster election of 1784. It was enough for them that the King was determined that Fox should not have a seat in the new Parliament.

"So you are going to vote for that sad dog Charles Fox," said a gentleman meeting a friend on the way to the hustings.

"I am determined, sir," the other replied, "to give Mr. Fox my vote, not because he is a sad dog, but for a better reason. He is a good house dog—I mean a good House of Commons dog."

As a squib writer of the time put it—

Sure heaven approves of Fox's cause,  
Though slaves at Court abhor him.  
To vote for Fox then who can pause,  
When angels canvass for him.

The angels were the beautiful Duchess of Devonshire and the Ladies Carlisle, Derby, Duncannon, and Beauchamp, who went from house to house with a fox's brush displayed in the hat, soliciting votes for their hero.

## COFFEE HOUSE POLITICS

Even when there was no election in prospect, party feeling ran very high. Hogarth's plate entitled "The Politician" shows us a man reading a newspaper with such intentness that the flame of the candle in his hand burns through the brim of his hat. He was supposed to be a Mr. Tibson, a lace man in the Strand, who paid more attention to politics than he did to business.

Addison describes how he went round the town, collecting the opinions at various coffee houses on the news brought from France that King Louis was dead. At the St. James's he "heard the whole Spanish monarchy disposed of, and all the line of Bourbon in less than a quarter of an hour." At Jenny Man's "an alert young fellow" urged his company to be "up to the walls of Paris directly." The wits at Wills's lamented that neither Racine, Corneille nor Boileau were alive to write an elegy upon the departed monarch, while in Fish Street "the chief politician of that quarter" declared that "if the King of France is certainly dead, we shall have plenty of mackerel this season, our fisheries will not be disturbed by privateers."

Addison also tells us of the political upholsterer, who rose before daybreak to read the *Postman*, and "who would take two or three turns to the other end of the town to see if there were any Dutch mails come in." This man, "who was much more inquisitive to know what passed in Poland than in his own family," was supposed to have been the father of Dr. Arne, the composer.

There were many political debating societies in London. The *Morning Chronicle* of 1779 advertises,

"The Apollo Society for the discussion of all questions in history, literature, policy and theology at the King's Arms Tavern, Grafton Street, Soho. To-morrow the 3rd inst., will be debated the following questions—'Would not a union between Great Britain and Ireland be the best mode of redressing the grievances of that country and securing this. The chair to be taken precisely at 8 o'clock. Admittance sixpence. Lemonade and porter for those who choose to

## POLITICS

refresh themselves in an adjacent room. N.B. The rooms will be illuminated with wax lights."

Thus early did the Irish Question, mitigated though it might be with lemonade and porter, obtrude itself into our politics.

Fielding satirised the Robin Hood Club in Butcher's Row, which was composed of traders and workmen, and which met to discuss political affairs. This club would sit for three hours, each member being allowed to speak for five minutes, at the end of which short space he was silenced by the President's hammer.

This intense devotion to politics was characteristic of Englishmen all through the century. It divided families, broke friendships, and was the cause of duels, feuds and financial ruin. The Tory would not deal with the Whig, nor the Whig with the Tory. Even the clergy attracted congregations of those who professed the same views regarding church and state. Women enquired the politics of their mantua makers and their chairmen. Indeed, women were more ardently political than men.

"Women of this turn," says Addison, "are so earnest in contending for hereditary right, that they wholly neglect the education of their sons and heirs, and are so taken up with their zeal for the church, that they cannot find time to teach their children the catechism. . . . We sometimes see a pair of stays ready to burst with sedition, and the most masculine passions expressed in the sweetest voices."

Parliamentary reform did not come until the following century; but there were many protests against political abuses, and suggestions for improvements. As early as 1776, the ubiquitous John Wilkes introduced a Bill "for the just and equal Representation of the People of England in Parliament."

Wilkes's proposals went further than the Reform Bill. He would have given a vote to "every free agent," though he did not explain what he meant by this expression; have disfranchised the rotten boroughs, and given additional

members to populous counties, and to the new manufacturing towns.

"I wish, Sir," he exclaimed, "an English Parliament to speak the free unbiassed sense of the body of the English people, and of every man among us, of each individual who may justly be supposed to be comprehended in a fair majority. The meanest mechanic, the poorest peasant and day labourer has important rights, respecting his personal liberty, that of his wife and children, his property, however inconsiderable, his wage his earnings, the very price and value of each days hard labour, which are in many trades regulated by the power of Parliament. Every law relative to marriage, to the protection of wife, sister or daughter against violence or brutal lust, to every contract or agreement with a rapacious or unjust master is of importance to the manufacturer,<sup>1</sup> the cottager, the servant, as well as to the rich subjects of the State."

Wilkes was undoubtedly a man of infamous character. He may have been a demagogue; but anyone who could stand up in the House of Commons and speak such words as these, would certainly become the idol of the London populace. Wilkes was not the only man to advocate parliamentary reform. Granville Sharpe wrote a pamphlet, which he entitled "A declaration of the people's natural right to the legislature." Cartwright, "The father of Reform" as he was afterwards called, began in the year of Wilkes's famous speech, his life-long crusade against the evils and anomalies of parliamentary representation. Other reformers, influenced perhaps by the teaching of Rousseau, or the principals of the American revolution, advocated the benefits of a wider franchise. They were aided in their endeavours by various political societies, which met together to discuss political matters and particularly legislative reform. In 1782 there was a meeting of the Friends of Reform at the Thatched House Tavern, in St. James's Street. It was attended by Wilkes and Cartwright, Wyvell and Jebb, as well as Lord Surrey, the Duke of Richmond and Pitt himself. They decided that "applica-

<sup>1</sup> In the eighteenth century a man who worked in a factory was called a manufacturer.

tion should be made to Parliament by petition from the collective body of the people in their respective districts, requesting a substantial reform of the Commons House of Parliament."

In 1798 the Duke of Norfolk, who was a member of the Society for promoting Constitutional Information, went so far as to propose at a public dinner, "Our sovereign's health—the Majesty of the People." For this he was deprived of his offices. The horrors of the French revolution had done their work, and the English Government was terrified of liberty, whether in speech or action. Thomas Paine had had to flee to France to avoid prosecution for the second part of his *Rights of Man*. John Frost, who had declared in the Percy Coffee House to some *agent provocateur* that he was all for equality and no kings, was condemned to six months' imprisonment and to stand in the pillory. A mob of sympathisers destroyed the pillory and Frost marched back again to Newgate, arm-in-arm with his friend Horne Took. The latter had been fined and imprisoned for trying to raise a subscription for the American colonists, and in 1794 he was tried for High Treason, but acquitted. Godwin escaped prosecution for his *Political Justice*, because Pitt, as Mrs. Shelley declared, thought that "a three guinea book could not do much harm among those who had not three shillings to spare." Pitt had underrated the resources of the working man. Clubs were formed in London, for the express purpose of buying and reading *Political Justice*. It was a time of hardship, scarcity and high taxation. The war with France was draining the nation of its wealth, and the poor, who saw very clearly that the country was in a parlous state, were willing to join with the middle classes in some desperate attempt to put things right. For the most part they were moderate in their demands; but the Government was in a panic. It is a disease which attacks governments and crowds, and it is difficult to say which behaves with the greater folly. The Government agents ran about feverishly, arresting political orators, snooping round taverns and bar parlours, sending their spies into meetings and friendly gatherings, to play the patriot and entangle men in



## BIRTH OF THE REFORM BILL

their talk. Their efforts met with little success. The love of liberty had been planted in poor soil ; but it survived.

From the activities of eighteenth-century Liberals arose that great movement which many years later placed the Reform Bill on the statute book and was the cause of many other reforms and ameliorations.

## INNS, TAVERNS AND COFFEE HOUSES

THERE are not many of the old inns or taverns of London left to us. The "Saracen's Head" on Snow Hill, that great posting house, has gone, and so has another, the "White Horse Cellars" in Piccadilly.

We should look in vain for the "Pickled Egg" in Pickled Egg Walk, Clerkenwell, the "Dog's Head and Porridge Pot" at Spitalfields, or the "Bull and Mouth" in Bishopsgate Street. The "George" at Southwark is still with us and the "Cheshire Cheese," Johnson's old tavern.

In Wapping High Street there is still "The Town of Ramsgate." It was known as "The Red Cow" when Judge Jeffreys was set upon there by an infuriated mob and nearly killed. There is also the "Hoop and Grapes" in Butchers' Row, Aldgate, and the "Anchor" at Bankside. There may be many more who keep their ancient signs though the old buildings are long since destroyed.

In the plays and novels of the eighteenth century, there is frequent reference to inns and taverns and they are generally spoken of with approbation as affording warmth, comfort and good entertainment for man and beast.

The large posting-houses aimed at a very high standard of comfort. Their feather beds were large and soft, with thick curtains to keep out all draughts, there were wax candles in the parlours, which to be sure were charged for in the bill, but one must pay for luxuries.

When the inns were crowded, as often happened, guests were required to share a room or even a bed with total strangers; but this was not thought anything out of the way, and was as readily accepted as the sharing of a steamer cabin at the present time.

In the coffee-room the mahogany of the dining table reflected the silver of Sheffield, and the gleam of steel two-pronged forks. The fires were large and glowing, the food ample and well cooked. Great joints adorned the sideboard and were sometimes carried round on trollies, so that each guest could choose his own cut. There were even hams, game pies and sirloins kept in a glass case in the hall to tempt the appetites of travellers as they entered.

The landlord knew good wine, and inns would be noted for their Madeira or Lisbon, or for that pipe or two of port that mine host had laid down when the Methuen Treaty <sup>1</sup> was signed.

A common dining-room did not come in till the close of the century. In the earlier days there was nothing but the inn kitchen or a private parlour.

Everyone who dined in the coffee-room sat at the same long table. Ladies and men of rank did not use the common-room, but were bowed by a smiling landlord into the "White Rose" or the "Ramillies." Rooms were all named in inns in those days. Boys did not perambulate the house shouting numbers raucously; they asked for the gentleman in the Blue Room or the quality in the Admiral Vernon.

Mistakes were sometimes made.

The landlady in *Tom Jones* when Tom first arrived with his very dubious companion attacked him with a broom, and hurled opprobrious epithets at the luckless female. On the following day, having discovered that the half-clothed creature, who had entered her house with Jones, was in reality "Captain Water's lady, one of the quality in fact," she is abject in her apologies.

"For Lud, madam," says she, "how should I have imagined that a lady of your fashion would appear in such a dress. I am sure, madam, if I had once suspected that your ladyship

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<sup>1</sup> Of 1703. By this treaty port wine was let into England almost duty free.

was your ladyship I would sooner have burnt my tongue out, than have said what I have said. And I hope your ladyship will accept of a gown, till you can get your own clothes."

We may notice in passing that our ancestors never "stayed" at inns; they "lay" in them.

"We lay at Wellingborough," says Horace Walpole. "Pray never lie there. The beastliest inn upon earth is there."

The traveller by the waggons, the outside coach passenger, and the pedestrian, if received at all, by inns of this class, were thrust into the kitchen.

"They showed me into the kitchen," says Carl Moritz, the Swiss pastor who travelled through a part of England upon foot, "and set me down to sup at the same table with some soldiers and the servants. I now for the first time, found myself in one of those kitchens which I had so often read of in Fielding's fine novels. The chimney in this kitchen, where they were roasting and boiling, seemed to be taken off from the rest of the room, and enclosed by a wooden partition. The rest of the apartment was made use of as a sitting and eating room. All round on the shelves there were pewter dishes and plates, and the ceiling was well stored with provisions of various kinds, such as sugar loaves, black puddings, hams, sausages, fitches of bacon, etc."

Moritz often found it most difficult to obtain accommodation, as the better-class inn refused to entertain foot passengers. Men did not walk on eighteenth-century roads if they could ride or drive, and a Mr. Warner, a clergyman who went for a walking tour through England, encountered much rudeness from innkeepers, and also from the street urchins, who obviously thought him mad.

Our travelling ancestors had one very odd custom. They wrote upon the windows of their rooms when they were staying at an inn. Some even carried diamond pencils with them for this purpose, others used the stone in a ring or other

ornament. Why they did it, we do not know. Possibly the practice relieved the tedium of travelling and staying at inns, or it may have originated in the curious mania for self-expression which prompts some horrible people nowadays to deface beautiful buildings with their detestable names. Swift wrote upon a window, which until then had been quite clear,

Thanks to my stars, I once can see  
A window here from scribbling free.

In a popular inn the windows would often be entirely covered with names, verses and epigrams.

If the shop signs were abolished, the signs of inns and taverns have flourished into our own day. The same incongruities which Addison noticed about the "Bell and Neat's Tongue" and the "Dog and Gridiron" were to be found on the signs of inns. Many fanciful reasons for these combinations have been given.

The "Bull and Mouth" is supposed to be "Boulogne Mouth," and the "Goat and Compasses" a Puritan motto: "God encompasseth us." It is much more probable that they owed their existence in the first place to an amalgamation of two inns, and that, afterwards, the sign being curious and original, was copied.

The inn signs, Walpole noted, were illustrating the history of the times. After Culloden, "the 'Duke's Head' has succeeded almost universally to 'Admiral Vernon's' as his had left but few traces of the 'Duke of Ormond's.'"

The food at London inns and taverns was proverbially good, and many besides travellers dined as a matter of course at an inn or a tavern. For a shilling a man could get a good dinner at an ordinary.

Dr. Johnson usually paid 7*d.*, and if a man could not afford so much he could go to a "dive" or underground restaurant where he might, for as little as 3½*d.*, get a meal of cowheel or tripe, and wipe his hands afterwards on the back of a woolly Newfoundland dog.

## INNS, TAVERNS AND COFFEE HOUSES

At another tavern of a very different class seven people sat down in 1752 to the following menu :

Bread and Beer.	Un Phésant
Potage de Tortue.	Dix ortolans.
Calipash.	Une tourte de Cerises.
Calpees.	Artichaux a le Provensalle.
Un paté de Jambon de Bayone.	Choufleurs au Flour.
Potage Julien Verd.	Cretes de Cocq en Bonets
Two Turbots to remove the Soops.	Amortes de Jesuits.
Haunch of venison.	Salade.
Palais de Mouton.	Chicken.
Selle de Mouton.	Ice Cream and Fruits.
Salade.	Fruits of various sorts, forced.
Saucisses au Ecrevisses.	Fruit from Market.
Boudin blanc a le Reine.	Butter and Cheese.
Petits patés a l'Espaniol.	Claret.
Coteletts a la Cardinal.	Champaign.
Selle d'Agneau glace aux Co-	Burgundy.
Combres.	Hock.
Saumon a la Chambord.	White Wine.
Fillets de Saules Royales.	Madeira.
Une bisque de lait de Maquereaux.	Sack.
Un Lambert aux Innocents.	Cape.
Des Perdrix Sauce Vin de Cham-	Cyprus.
paign.	Neuilly.
Poulets a le Russiene.	Usquebaugh.
Ris de Veau en Arlequin	Spa and Bristol Waters.
Quée d'Agneau a la Montaban.	Oranges and Lemons.
Dix cailles.	Coffee and Tea.
Un Lapreau.	Lemonade.

The dinner is remarkable not only for the immense amount of food offered to the company ; but from the fact that part of the menu is in French, or what the tavern-keeper thought to be French.

This was not usual in taverns in the eighteenth century. The Gargantuan meal cost £81 11s. 6d. and we are told that besides all these numerous and varied dishes there was "a turtle sent as a present to the company, and dressed in a very hight gout after the West Indian manner."

The ordinary was much the same as our *table d'hôte*. It was a fixed meal at a fixed price, and the old name has lingered

into the present age. There are still a few "farmers' ordinaries" in old inns in country towns.

Some of the most celebrated of the taverns were to be found in, or just off Fleet Street. There until 1787 was the "Devil" where Ben Johnson had been wont to dine, the "Hercules Pillars" where Pepys often went, the "Mitre" Tavern, the "Mary Gold," also known as the "Man in the Moon," and the "Bolt in Tun." In Wine Office Court off Fleet Street was the "Cheshire Cheese," which Dr. Johnson used to frequent.

Various trades and professions patronised different taverns. The lawyers went to the "Hell" at Westminster hard by the Law Courts, or the "Woolpack" in Foster Lane. Stock-jobbers frequented the "White Horse" in Castle Alley, booksellers and printers foregathered and did their business at the "Chapter House" by St. Paul's, and porters and draymen refreshed themselves at the "White Lion" in Gracechurch Street.

The inns by the riverside were the lodging-place of those who landed at the Thames stairs and the docks of London. Some of them were respectable houses where the travellers could stay in comfort, but the majority were places of the worst reputation, frequented by thieves and footpads, fences and prostitutes. These latter taverns were open night and day. Foreigners landing from ships were the prey of these people unless they went immediately to some reputable house, where their compatriots were entertained, and warned of the dangers of London. There were houses which catered for the foreigner and the provincial.

At the "Welsh Harp" in Chancery Lane there were to be found men from the Principality. Perhaps it had a Minstrel Club like the "King's Head" in Spitalfields where on Fridays anyone who loved music was welcome to come.

The "Cider Cellar," which Porson used to frequent, was called a "Midnight Concert Room," and Offley's in Henrietta Street welcomed a regular amateur choral society.

Evans's in Covent Garden, that historic house where Sir

Kenelm Digby had lived, was as famous for its singing as for its dinners.

A foolish licensing law had not then forbidden music in the public house and the English were a musical nation. When harmony was banished from the tap-room and the bar parlour, it fled away across the seas to a country which welcomed it in taverns and beer gardens. Of the licensing laws, however, very little good can be said. They have been the target for abuse at all times, and in the eighteenth century they were not only abused, they were often entirely disregarded.

It was computed that there were 5,204 taverns and beer shops in London, or one for every two hundred of the population, including children.

Drunkenness has been an English vice since the Danish invasion, and perhaps earlier; but it was a slothful sodden kind of vice, not usually leading to crimes of violence. Early in the century, however, or perhaps when King William landed, there came over an ardent spirit known as Hollands or Geneva. It was sold very cheaply. A man could be drunk for 1*d.* or dead drunk for 2*d.* according to advertisements. Thinking that it was something like English ale he drank it in large quantities, and its effects were disastrous. It could then be sold without any licence, it was not beer or wine, and gin shops were opened all over the metropolis.

Hogarth's plates of Beer Street and Gin Lane are designed to show the different effects of the two beverages. In the first picture the people are prosperous and well dressed, and if they are fat and somnolent, at least well-to-do and happy. The butcher and blacksmith with their foaming tankards have the *Morning Advertiser* spread out before them. The pawnshop, that barometer of poverty, is falling into ruin; two fishwomen, with a modicum of ale beside them, are singing a song about the herring fishery, and the only man not quite at his ease is the signboard painter on his ladder.

The other plate gives us a dreadful contrast. Here everybody is in a state of utter squalor, vice and misery. The



ballad seller, with his basket of unsold sheets and his bottle of gin, has parted with most of his garments and, in a state of extreme emaciation, lies either dead or senseless in the street. The half-naked woman, with her hand in her snuff-box, who reclines upon the steps, lets her hapless infant fall over the rails into the area below. A man is gnawing at a bare bone, which a dog endeavours to pull out of his mouth. Two persons are trying to sell boots and kitchen utensils to a pawnbroker, who stands before the only prosperous-looking house in the neighbourhood. Many other figures illustrate the dreadful effects of drunkenness. Hogarth no doubt exaggerated. His scenes are too horrible to be true; but that they were founded upon very terrible fact, no one can deny.

It was not Hogarth who has described to us how working men went into gin shops on Saturday night, and were found lying dead drunk on the pavement next morning, when worshippers wended their way to morning service.

Those in authority were not slow in realising the danger of an uncontrolled sale of ardent spirits. The Master of the Rolls, Sir Joseph Jekyll, in a committee of the House in 1736, moved that a heavy tax should be put upon gin, and that those who sold it should be licensed.

Taxes and restrictions have checked drunkenness in our own age to a very great degree; but in the eighteenth century there was no police or public opinion to enforce any law.

When the people found that they could not buy gin for 1d. at any street corner, they broke into a riot and smashed the windows of Sir Joseph Jekyll's house. The military had to be called out to quell the disturbances. Some of the gin shops draped their signs in black cloth or put a doll in a coffin in the window which they called *Madam Geneva*.

Then suddenly all this popular indignation subsided. The soldiers went back to their barracks, the black cloths disappeared, dolls returned to their natural uses. What had happened? Had the gin shop keepers paid £50 for licences?

In the whole of London only three persons had thought it necessary to do so.

Men and women no longer asked for gin or Hollands; they bought "colic or gripe waters," "King Theodore of Corsica," "the Ladies' Delight" or "the Last Shift." The early bootlegger had started his nefarious trade.

The coffee and chocolate houses of London were almost as numerous as the inns and taverns. The greatest number of these were to be found in the quarter north of the Strand, near Covent Garden and Drury Lane, but there were coffee houses all over the metropolis catering for many kinds of persons.

"The Rainbow" in Fleet Street was one of the oldest. The proprietor of this had been prosecuted at the Wardmote in 1657 for annoying his neighbours by the smell of his coffee. One might have thought that there were worse smells in the London of the seventeenth century.

Will's was for a long time the resort of men of letters and of fashion. Had not the great Dryden sat there in his own place, by the fireside in winter and at the window in summer?

Addison and Steele went to Button's Coffee House in Russell Street. This was founded by one Button, who had been a servant in the Countess of Warwick's family. Here was the famous carved head of a lion, and into its capacious mouth communications to the Guardian could be put.

Addison, before he married, always dined there and sat on far into the evening talking to his friends. Swift also went to Button's and to the Smyrna and the St. James's. Fielding and Dr. Johnson might have been seen at the Bedford and Sheridan at the Piazza.

Old Slaughter's in St. Martin's Lane attracted literary men and artists. Gainsborough came there, and Hogarth and Richard Wilson, Ramsay, Shipley and Samuel Scott.

It was not only the wits and men of letters who frequented coffee houses. Robbins's and Garraway's were houses for City people or for those who had business in the City.

## COFFEE HOUSES

Booksellers congregated at the Chapter Coffee House, and Grub Street hacks waited wearily at the doors. Poor Chatterton came here with his *Thomas Rowley* in his pocket.

In a box at the Chapter House a little coterie of learned men met every evening, and was known as the "Witenagemote." They supped there for a shilling and sat drinking punch and talking till far into the night. The other boxes in the room were filled with eager listeners.

There were the political coffee houses; the St. James's where the Whigs went, the Cocoa Tree, which was the Tory and Jacobite house.

Officers in the army frequented a coffee house called "Young Man's." "Old Man's" was the meeting place of stock-jobbers and others. "Little Man's" had a most unsavoury reputation.

"I was glad," says a traveller, in 1714, who had looked in here, "to drop two or three half-crowns at faro to get off with a clear skin."

Dr. Johnson reigned as a potentate and men flocked to the Bedford or the Turk's Head to listen to him. There he laid down the law, and it is well to remember when we read the immortal *Life*, that his sententiousness and gruff humour were not intended to annihilate the fawning Boswell but for a large circle of admirers and opponents at the Literary Club or the "Cheshire Cheese."

A man had to pontificate if he wished to remain the King of his company. Other coffee houses had their little potentates who had often nothing to recommend them besides a carrying voice, and a great opinion of their own wisdom.

Addison tells us of the men who reigned at one particular coffee house. There was Beaver, a haberdasher, who got there as early as six in the morning, surely an unconscionable hour at which to declare "what measure the allies must enter into upon this new posture of affairs." He was followed "in the middle hours of the day by Embulus," whose "wisdom and knowledge are serviceable to all that think fit to make use of them; in the private exigencies of his friends, he lends

at legal value, considerable sums, which he might highly increase by rolling in the public stocks."

This being the case, it is not surprising that the generous Embulus

"has so great an authority in his little diurnal audience, that when he shakes his head at any piece of publick news, they all of them appear dejected, and on the contrary, go home to their dinners with a good stomach and cheerful aspect when Embulus seems to intimate that things go well. Tom the Tyrant takes the government upon him between the hours of eleven and twelve at night, and gives his orders in the most arbitrary manner to the servants below him as to the disposition of liquors, coals and cinders."

Though talk was the characteristic of coffee houses, other things were transacted there. Men came to read the newspapers in an age when newspapers were dear to buy. They wrote letters there. Steele, when corresponding with his "dear lovely Mrs. Scurlock, his dear, dear Prue," often writes on coffee-house paper. When a gentleman at the St. James's asked him the news from Lisbon, he answered, so he tells us, "She's exquisitely handsome," and when another desires to know "When I had last been to Hampton Court," I replied, "'Twill be on Tuesday come se'nnight."

Some coffee houses, besides newspapers and writing materials, had a definite and particular attraction. There was a museum of curiosities at Don Saltero's, where they charged for tea "only eightpence each person, and that entitles one to see his museum of rarities, a catalogue of which may be had for twopence."

At Garroway's there was an auction-room, where wines were sold by the candle. An inch of candle was lighted when the sale began, and the man who was bidding when the candle flickered out was the buyer. Other houses encouraged music, and had glee clubs, and meetings for instrumental playing. All coffee houses, inns, and taverns were used as places of call, where men might meet clients and customers or hold assemblies, though these uses became less general as

the century advanced. The place of the tavern and the coffee house was gradually taken by the club. A small circle of friends would meet in a private room to talk or play games.

There were many political clubs. In the year 1700 the Kit Kat was founded. Walpole and Addison, Garth and Grenville, Congreve and Vanbrugh were among the members. The Whig leaders met there to discuss their plans, and keep in touch with Hanover.

It is doubtful how the name arose. Some have thought that it was called after the excellent mutton pies purveyed to the club by one Christopher Katt, and known as Kit Kats. All the earlier members presented their portraits painted by Kneller to Jacob Tonson, the bookseller, who was the secretary of the club. It met at Shire Lane by Temple Bar or in the summer at the Upper Flask at Hampstead, and sometimes the members went down to Tonson's house at Barn End, and saw their portraits—three-quarter lengths, because the room was not higher—hanging on his walls.

Addison tells us about all kinds of queer clubs. He was perhaps copying Ned Ward, who had written a long account of fictitious clubs. We can hardly imagine that there really was a Corpulent Club, or a Club for Scarecrows and Skeletons. The members of the Humdrum might have been "very honest gentlemen of peaceable disposition that used to sit together and say nothing till midnight." There are plenty of club members like that nowadays, we believe, and if the name of their club sounds improbable it is not more so than the "Codgers" or the "Sublime Society of Beefsteaks" which lasted until the middle of the nineteenth century, and has a modern successor.

It was at this club that Wilkes produced his "Essay on Women," begging the members if they disapproved, to destroy it and say nothing about it. It was so gross that it offended the not very squeamish taste of the "Beefsteaks." One of them, Lord Sandwich, who, according to Churchill, "Wrought sin with greediness, and courted shame with greater zeal than good men seek for fame," remembered the

wretched effusion, and years afterwards produced a copy in the House of Lords, who decided it to be a libel and breach of privilege. Wilkes, fearing to stand his trial before Lord Mansfield, fled abroad, and was subsequently outlawed.

Many clubs had been coffee or chocolate houses. Arthur's Club and the Cocoa Tree and White's had all been chocolate houses before they became clubs.

White's disputed with Almack's as to which gamed the deepest. According to Horace Walpole,

"Almack's has taken the pas of White's. The young men of the age lose ten, fifteen, twenty thousand pounds in an evening there. Lord Stavordale, not one and twenty, lost £11,000 last Tuesday; but recovered it by one great hand at hazard. He swore a great oath, 'Now if I had been playing deep I might have won millions.'"

Hogarth's well-known plate of the Gaming House in the *Rake's Progress*, though not a picture of White's, illustrates an episode in the history of that club. In it we see the company so intent upon the play, its gains and losses, that none notices the smoke and the flames that are breaking out at the end of the room. A watchman with his staff and lanthorn rushes in to warn them of their danger. This incident actually occurred at White's and the club was burnt down in 1773.

The literary clubs were numerous. Of these the most famous was "The Club" founded by Dr. Johnson. It met at the "Turk's Head" in Gerrard Street and the members were at first limited to nine. They were Johnson, Reynolds, Hawkins, Beauclerk, Bennet, Langton, Burke, Chamier and Goldsmith. The numbers were gradually increased, and include some of the most distinguished men of the eighteenth century.

Goldsmith gives us an account of the proceedings of a club known as the Choice Spirits where ordinary citizens met for relaxation of an evening.

"The Grand with a mallett in his hand presided at the head

of the table." He had soon "knocked down Mr. Spriggins for a song."

"I was upon this," says Goldsmith, "whispered by one of the company, who sat next me, that I should now see something touched off to a nicety, for Mr. Spriggins was going to give us 'Mad Tom' in all its glory. Mr. Spriggins endeavoured to excuse himself, for as he was to act a madman and a king, it was impossible to go through the part properly without a crown and chains. His excuses were over ruled by a great majority, and with much vociferation. The president ordered up the jack chain, and instead of a crown our performer covered his brows with an inverted jordan. After he had rattled his chains and shook his head to the great delight of the whole company, he began his song.

"As I have heard few young fellows offer to sing in company that did not expose themselves, it was no great disappointment to me to find Mr. Spriggins among the number; however not to seem an odd fish, I rose from my seat in rapture, cried out 'Bravo! Encore!' and slapped the table as loud as any of the rest.

"The gentleman who sat next to me seemed highly pleased with my taste, and whispering, told me I had suffered an immense loss, for had I come a few minutes sooner, I might have heard 'Gee! ho! Dobbin!' sung in a tip-top manner, by the pimple-nosed spirit at the president's right elbow; but he was evaporated before I came."

Many clubs were frankly disorderly. Whether the Mohocks and their club actually existed has been disputed. Addison and Swift certainly believed in these assemblies of riotous youths who terrorised the London streets, and Gay wrote of them in his "Trivia."

Who has not trembled at the Mohock's name?  
Was there a watchman took his hourly rounds  
Safe from their blows or new invented wounds?

The Bold Bucks and the Hell Fire were other clubs of a frankly disreputable nature.

Besides these coteries, which were recruited from the nobility and men of fashion, there were the clubs of the populace. These were known as mug-houses, or sometimes

street clubs, and were open to all the inhabitants of a particular street or neighbourhood, or in the case of the mug-house clubs to everyone.

The members of these clubs belonged generally to what the eighteenth century called the mob. They were usually Jacobite in their politics, less from principle than from dislike of the more reputable citizens who were Whig. The name died out but the clubs continued, and their members were embroiled in most of the riots through the century.

The enormous increase of clubs and club life points to a settled security, greater wealth and prosperity, and a growing interest in learning and in politics which is characteristic of the age.



## PLEASURE GARDENS, SPAS AND THE PARKS AND FAIRS

LONDON has gained immeasurably and lost very little since the eighteenth century. One of the things, however, which elderly Londoners miss are the pleasure gardens. There are no places now like Earl's Court and the White City, where the ordinary man, who cannot belong to Hurlingham and Ranelagh, may go and enjoy himself in the open air.

In the little London of the eighteenth century there were numerous pleasure gardens. Almost every tavern on the outskirts of the town had its garden with a lawn and a few trees, and perhaps a bowling green. Some of them had a pond which they termed an ornamental water, a dancing-room, and a band which played among the trees. Within a walk of his home the London citizen would find some gardens where he could go in summer, and, at a price suitable to his pocket, entertain his wife and family or the lady of his affections. Among the most famous of these gardens were Vauxhall and Ranelagh.

Vauxhall, which had been known as the New Spring Gardens in Evelyn's time, was the oldest of these resorts. It was situated just across the river at Lambeth. Mr. Spectator takes Sir Roger de Coverley there by boat, and this was the most usual way of approach, as the gardens were far from any bridge.

Sir Roger was shocked at the levity of the young men who referred to him as "a queer old put" and the wanton baggage "who asked him if he would drink a bottle of mead" with her. As he left the garden he "told the mistress of the house who sat at the bar, that he should be a better customer

PLEASURE GARDENS, SPAS, PARKS AND FAIRS  
to her garden if there were more nightingales and fewer strumpets."

Beau Tibbs went there sitting upon his wife's lap in the coach because "Mrs. Tibbs had a natural aversion to the water."

"Upon entering the garden," Goldsmith tells us, "I found every sense occupied with more than expected pleasure; the lights everywhere glimmering through the scarcely moving trees, the full-bodied concert bursting on the stillness of the night, the natural concert of the birds in the more retired part of the grove, vying with that which was formed by art, the company gaily dressed, looking satisfaction, and the tables spread with various delicacies."

Smollett's *Lydia Melford* describes it as

"a spacious garden part laid out in delightful walks, bounded with high trees and hedges and paved with gravel, part exhibiting a wonderful assemblage of the most picturesque and striking objects, pavilions, lodges, groves, grottos, lawns, temples and cascades, porticoes, colonades, and rotundos, adorned with pillars, statues and paintings, the whole illuminated with an infinite number of lamps, disposed in different figures of suns, stars and constellations."

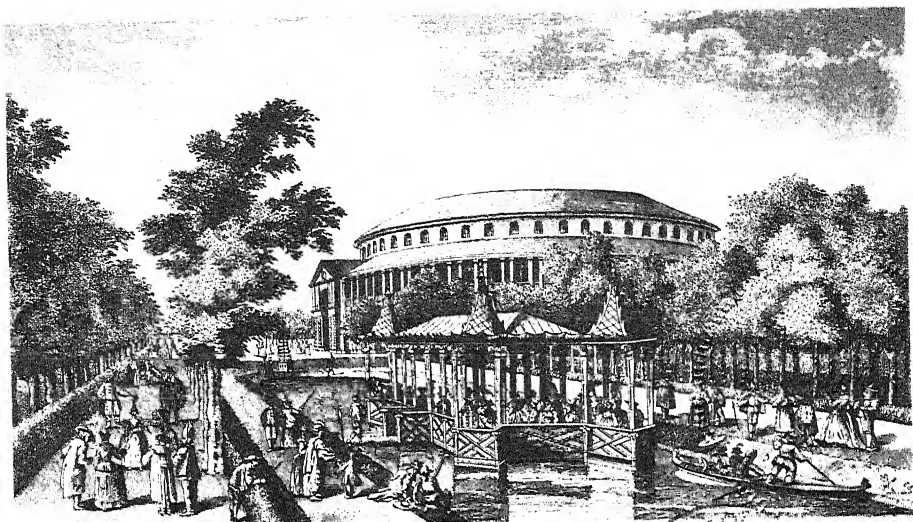
The paintings of which Miss Melford speaks were many of them by such artists as Hogarth and Hayman, and among the statues was one by Roubillac of Handel as Orpheus playing upon a lyre. Some of the vistas terminated in coloured representations of ruins, triumphal arches and distant mountains.

The place was open and apparently thronged all day, for we hear of a crowd of 8,000 people being there in the morning.

Then oft returning from the green retreats  
Where fair Vauxhallia decks her sylvan seats;  
Where each spruce nymph from city counter free  
Sups the frothed syllabub and fragrant tea,  
While with sliced ham, scraped beef and burnt champagne,  
Her prentice lover soothes his amorous pain.

This is Canning's description of the gardens.

Vauxhall had always been the people's garden, and Mrs.



*Ranelagh Gardens*  
*Auxhall Gardens*



## RANELAGH GARDENS

Tibbs lamented that she would not see "a single creature for the evening above the degree of a cheesemonger."

Ranelagh Gardens, which were opened in 1742, were far more select and genteel, but they could be, as our ancestors would have said, "damned dull."

To Ranelagh once in my life  
By good natured force I was driven.  
The nations had ceased their long strife  
And Peace beamed her radiance from heaven.

What wonders were there to be found  
That a clown might enjoy or disdain.  
First we traced the gay ring all around,  
Ay, and then we went round it again.

A thousand feet rustled on mats,  
A carpet that once had been green,  
Men bowed with their outlandish hats  
With corners so fearfully keen.

Fair maids who at home in their haste,  
Had left all clothing else but a train  
Swept the floor clean as slowly they paced,  
Then walked round and swept it again.

The floor was that of the Rotunda where concerts and *ridottos* were held. The charge for these latter, which were assemblies for dancing and music, was a guinea, while the admission to the gardens was 1s. or 2s. 6d. with refreshments.

Like Vauxhall, Ranelagh was opened early in the morning, and we hear of much time being wasted in "destructive breakfastings" and of a bill being introduced to close Ranelagh and similar places until 5 p.m.

Unpleasant adventures could be met with even in these genteel gardens.

"I went to Ranelagh to-night," says Lady Louisa Stuart, "tête à tête with Lady Mary. . . . I have nothing to tell you of it, but that I was seized by a very drunken beau and kindly invited to drink coffee—fairly picked up in short—a thing I had no notion one could possibly be exposed to there."

## PLEASURE GARDENS, SPAS, PARKS AND FAIRS

There were many other gardens, Marylebone, Bagnigge Wells and the White Conduit House, the Florida Gardens, Cupar's Gardens and the Temples of Flora and Apollo across the river.

In Epping Forest there was the inn called "The Bald-Faced Stag," much patronised by the citizens, who on Easter Monday came out according to ancient custom to hunt the stag. Near this inn was still to be seen the Fairlop Oak, which had existed since the time of Henry VIII. It was hollow inside and many parties came to picnic there and boil their kettles within its hollow trunk.

So popular were these pleasure gardens that an attempt was made to turn the Pantheon into a winter garden. Lady Louisa Stuart, who has had an enthusiastic account of it from friends, doubts if she would have had "three guineas worth of amusement" there, and Horace Walpole was even more critical.

"The company," he says, "were led into the subterraneous apartment, which was laid with mould and planted with trees and crammed with nosegays; but the fresh earth and the dead leaves and the effluvia of breaths made such a stench and moisture that they were suffocated, and when they remounted the legs and wings of chickens poisoned them more."

Besides these gardens, which were entirely devoted to pleasure and amusement, there were the spas. The eighteenth century had a great belief in the efficacy of water taken internally and medicinally, and all sorts of maladies were treated in this way. Rich men and women went off to Bath or Harrogate, the Wells or Bristol Hot Springs; others of lesser means patronised the spas near London. The most celebrated of these was Hampstead, which had two wells or springs of chalybeate water, one in Well Walk and the other in what is now Fitzjohn's Avenue.

Hampstead was then a pretty rural place with fine new houses clustering round its church, and a beautiful wild heath covered with heather and ling. During the first thirty years

or so of the eighteenth century it was a fashionable place. It had its Great Room and its Long Room, its balls and concerts. The inns and taverns advertised fine dinners, there were gardens where people could drink tea and syllabubs. Every Monday from March to November music and dancing lasted all day long. There was even a spot where duels could be conveniently fought in old Middlesex forest close to Caen Wood.

The Hampstead Assemblies were famous after the waters had fallen into disrepute. A short stage ran from London to Hampstead several times a day. The horses of those who rode could be accommodated close to the wells, and inns and lodgings offered accommodation to such visitors as preferred to stay in the place.

Islington Spa, or New Tunbridge Wells as it was called by the proprietors, who hoped to persuade the public that its waters were as good as those of the famous wells in Kent, was a place similar to Hampstead. It had been opened as a spa in 1683 by a man called Sadler, and was sometimes known as Sadler's Wells.

There was no beautiful heath as at Hampstead, nor could it boast that it was 400 feet above the sea, but it was sufficiently far from London to have good country air and pleasant gardens. In the earlier years of the century it was much in favour with the health and pleasure seeker, and the Princesses Amelia and Caroline came there to drink the waters.

Kilburn also had a well, and sought to imitate Hampstead with a Great Room for dancing and concerts.

There was also a spa by old Pancras church, the water of which, we are told, "cleanses the body and sweetens the blood, and is a general and sovereign help to nature."

There were spas in Fleet Street, at Bermondsey, at Lambeth, at Kensington. There was St. Chad's Well in Gray's Inn Road, Merlin's Cave at the New River Head. Indeed, any place that had a spring which tasted rather unpleasant and out of the common set up to be a spa.

If the pleasure gardens, with the possible exception of

## PLEASURE GARDENS, SPAS, PARKS AND FAIRS

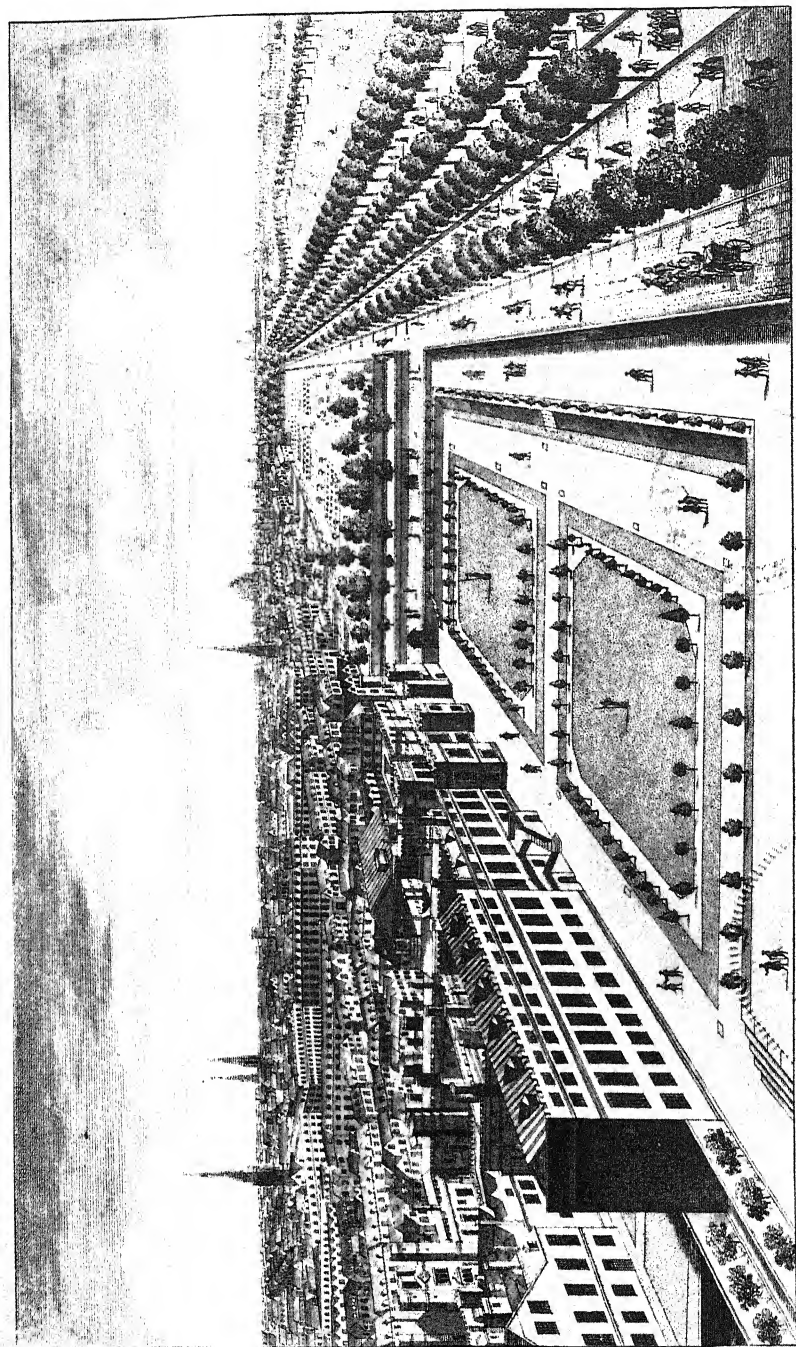
Ranelagh, were open to anyone, the parks, on weekdays at least, were the exclusive preserve of the gentry. The footman waited outside the railings to call his master's coach, or walk behind his mistress with his long stick ready to protect her. It was considered, no doubt with reason, to be quite unsafe for a well-dressed woman to walk alone in the streets of London. When she got within the gates of Hyde Park or St. James's, she might, however, throw such discretion to the winds. It was assumed that everyone she met was of her own class, and if not a friend or acquaintance, at least someone whose bona fides could be easily established.

Many women were masked, and thus protected as they supposed, would talk with anyone whom they chanced to meet. It was a pleasant break in the otherwise narrow and conventional lives of eighteenth-century women. It is, of course, absurd to suppose that no rogues or adventurers ever got into the park. The broken gamester, who still had a finely laced coat and fashionable wig, came there, hoping, perhaps, to pick up an heiress among the gay throng of ladies who walked up and down under the trees. Women of very dubious reputation came there under the protection of their masks. The only people who were never admitted were the poor. Perhaps they would not have cared much for the parks, had they been let in. They would have preferred to see a badger baited at Hockley in the Hole, or the tumblers and acrobats at Bagnigge Wells.

On Sunday at five o'clock in the summer the City crowded into the parks. They came in hired chaises, cabriolets or riding on hired hacks. Sometimes they came in their own carriages, for the City was growing rich and prosperous. It is probable that they were as well dressed as their betters who affected to despise them, but this the upper classes would never admit.

"The City gentry," we are told "are as distinguishable as a judge from his clerk, or a lady from her waiting woman. . . . Every illiterate coxcomb who has made a fortune by sharpening or shop-keeping will endeavour to mimic the great ones, yet





*St. James's Palace and its surroundings*



with all aids whatsoever, they appear at best but as very mean copies of the fine originals ; the Ludgate Hill hobble, the Cheapside swing and the general City jolt and wriggle in the gait, being easily perceived through all the artifices the smarts put upon them."

Before this frightful invasion, the fine ladies and gentlemen fled to their homes, leaving the park in the possession of the City.

King Charles II had greatly improved St. James's Park and had made the ornamental water with a decoy and other ponds for water fowl. Rosamund's Pond is mentioned in the literature of the time. Young lovers, it was said, threw themselves and their despair into its deep waters.

At the end of the Mall there was still the hoop which was used in playing the game of pall mall, though that pastime was no longer in fashion.

On the island in the lake one of the park keepers had a house which was opened as a place of entertainment for the citizens on Sunday evening. It communicated with the mainland by a bridge.

Hyde Park had also its lake, or as it was called the Serpentine River. The term river is not such a misnomer as may be supposed, as the Westbourne, that little stream which flowed down the heights near London, was here collected in a fine piece of water.

Duels were sometimes fought in Hyde Park, the most famous being the duel between the Duke of Hamilton and Lord Mohun, which Thackeray has immortalised for us.

It may be supposed that as London was such a comparatively small place its inhabitants could often go for walks and rambles in the country. It is true that within half an hour they could leave the town behind them ; but rural conditions near London were not of the pleasantest. A cordon of dung-hills and ash-heaps almost surrounded the metropolis ; and when these were passed, the country was frequently cut up into market gardens. There were, of course, the heaths and commons, Hampstead, Finchley, Putney, Blackheath,

Hounslow and others, but they were frequented by highway-men and footpads, and beautiful though they were, they were not the people's playground.

In most Englishmen there has ever been an inborn love of the country, and in spite of drawbacks, in spite of ecclesiastical censure, crowds poured out of London into the country on a Sunday afternoon. For the most part they came on foot, for Sunday travelling was frowned upon, and on that day stage-coaches did not run. They flocked into the pleasure gardens near London and crowded the ale-houses. They fished in the ponds by Rotherhithe Marsh or went birds' nesting in ancient Middlesex Forest. They went into the "Red Bull" at Canonbury near Islington, where Raleigh lived, it was said, and where they showed the room in which Goldsmith wrote *The Deserted Village*.

Holiday-makers took their glass at the "City Arms" in the City Road, and then wandered down Hagbush Lane where, we are told, "the wild onion, the clown's woundwort, wake robin, and abundance of other simples lovely in their forms, and of high medicinal value in our old barbers' and receipt books, take root, and seed and flower here in great variety."

Blake, when a boy of nine or ten, would set out from Golden Square, find his way across old Westminster Bridge, over St. George's Fields and through the open country to the large and pleasant village of Camberwell. Here, among meadows and groves, the youthful poet looked round upon the country, and stored up memories of bird and beast and flower.

The sun doth arise  
And make happy the skies,  
The merry bells ring  
To welcome the spring.  
The skylark and thrush  
The birds of the bush  
Sing louder around  
To the bells cheerful sound.  
While our sports shall be seen  
On the echoing green.

It is a pity that the environs of London were not always noted for such simple rural delights. Only too often the Londoners flocked into the country to see a bull-baiting or a prize-fight.

The fairs were, of course, a great attraction. In the country they were the event of the year; but even in London, with its many other amusements, they were most popular.

In the Middle Ages a cloth fair had been held within the precincts of St. Bartholomew's Priory, merchants from Ghent and Ypres came there with their wares. By the eighteenth century the commercial side of the fair had entirely disappeared. It was then given over to amusements and to the sale of such fairings as toys and sweets, gilded gingerbreads, Bristol diamonds, syllabub glasses, caudle cups, laces and ribbands.

There were articles to suit all purses ranging from  $\frac{1}{2}d.$  to 10s. Innumerable stalls were set up made of canvas stretched upon poles and railings. The fair broke its boundaries and spread out into Giltspur Street and Cock Lane.

No wheeled vehicle could approach the ground, which was thronged by a mob of excited people. Smithfield's sheep-pens were used for refreshment stalls. They were decorated with boughs and called by such alluring names as the "Royal Eating House," "Fair Rosamund's Bower," the "New London Tavern."

Cloths were spread on tables or planks and there were even knives and forks provided, though some of those who partook hardly knew how to use such implements. Here men might dine for  $3d.$  on spiced beef or fine fat oysters, whose shells were as big as tea saucers. The food was generally cold, though miniature sausages were fried over saucepans full of hot coals.

As for the shows they were innumerable and, in the opinion of those who frequented them, truly marvellous. There were puppet-shows depicting such events as the Queen of Sheba's visit to King Solomon, Daniel in the Lions' Den, the Tower of Babel, and the King's Coronation.

There was a learned horse who was so embarrassing as to discover that a lady in the audience very much wished to be

married, that a man preferred a quart of beer to listening to a good sermon, and that an old woman loved to lie abed of a morning. There were large children and tiny men, an occasional tiger or leopard, a mare who had seven feet, a learned pig and a mermaid. Travelling theatres set up and there were shows of conjuring, tight-rope dancing, acrobats and jugglers.

The men who ate glass and swallowed fire attracted gaping crowds, quack doctors did a roaring trade in the nostrums which would cure every disease under the sun. There was a well from which wine could be drawn at 3s. 6d. a quart, half-price at half-past eight. Bartholomew's, though the largest, was not the only fair in London. In Shepherd's Market was held May Fair which was at the height of its glory early in the century. Here, we are told, there were, beside cudgel and backsword players and a theatre, such delights as mountebanks, fire eaters, ass racing, sausage tables, dice tables, ups and downs, merry-go-rounds, bull baiting, grinning for a hat, running for a shift, hasty pudding eaters, eel drivers, and an infinite variety of other similar pastimes.

"That fair is now broke," we read in the *Tatler*; "but it is allowed still to sell animals there. Therefore if any lady or gentleman have occasion for a tame elephant let them inquire of Mr. Pinkethman who has one to dispose of at a reasonable rate. The downfall of Mayfair has quite sunk the price of this noble creature, as well as of many other curiosities of nature. A tiger will sell almost as cheap as an ox, and I am credibly informed a man may purchase a cat with three legs for very near the value of one with four. That there is a great desolation among the gentlemen and ladies who were the ornament of the town, and used to shine in plumes and diadems, the heroes being most of them pressed, and the queens beating hemp. Mrs. Saraband so famous for her ingenious puppet show has set up a troop under the term of jointed babies. I could not but be solicitous to know of her how she had disposen of that rake hell Punch, whose lewd life and conversation had given so much scandal, and did not a little contribute to the ruin of the fair. She told me with a sigh that despairing of ever retaining him, she would

## TOTTENHAM FAIR. PIE POWDER

not offer to place him in a civil family, but got him a post upon a stall in Wapping where he may be seen from sun rising to sun setting with a glass in one hand and a pipe in the other as sentry to a brandy shop."

Tottenham Fair, though outside the metropolis, was so near that it could easily be patronised by the citizen. It was much frequented, we are told, "by pick-pockets, sharpers, footpads, bawds and common whores," but these persons were not unknown at other fairs, and people flocked to Tottenham attracted by boxing contests, Punch and Judy or Jody as she was then called, and the great theatrical booths where plays were performed with such thrilling titles as "the Rum Duke and the Queer Duke," or "a Medly of Mirth and Sorrow," and "the Mad Lover."

Mr. French, who owned one of these booths, issued the following advertisement in the Spring of 1748 :

"At the amphitheatrical booth at Tottenham Court on Monday next, [being Easter Monday], Mr. French designing to please all in making his Country Wake complete by doubling the prizes given to be played for, as well as the sports, has engaged some of the best gamesters, Country against London, so make sides.

For cudgelling a laced hat value £1 5s. or one guinea in gold, for wrestling one guinea, money for boxing besides stage money. And to crown the diversion of the day he gives a fine smock to be jigged for by northern lasses against the nymphs to the westward of St. Giles's Church, to be entered at the Royal Oak in High Street, by hob clerk of the revels or his deputy. The doors will be opened at 11 o'clock, the sport to begin at two. Cudgelling as usual before the prizes. Best seats 2s. pitt and gallery 1s. upper gallery 6d."

At some fairs was held that curious court of summary jurisdiction known as the Court of Pie Powder. In this were settled all those many petty disputes between the fair people, the gipsies, vagrants, and other persons, who were here to-day and gone to-morrow.

The Steward appointed by the owner of the fair or market

PLEASURE GARDENS, SPAS, PARKS AND FAIRS  
tolls was the judge, and the offence had to be committed,  
complained of and redressed in one day.

The curious name was derived, according to Coke, from *curia pedis pulverizali*, the court of the dusty foot, because justice was done there as speedily as dust can fall from the foot. Others have declared, however, that it came from the Norman French *pied pulverdreau*, which signified a pedlar. A rough and curious kind of justice was often meted out at these courts.

Have its proceedings disallowed or  
Allowed at fancy of pie powder

says Butler in *Hudibras*.



## AMUSEMENTS

WE are often told that whereas comfort was the goal of the nineteenth-century Englishman, amusement is the paramount desire of his grandson. In this particular we have harked back to the spirit of the eighteenth century, though our entertainments are often of a different kind.

The theatre, which is still with us, though it is being driven out of the provinces by the cinema, was immensely popular in the eighteenth century. Stern churchmen might denounce its immoralities, the nonconformists might refuse to countenance it; but the mass of the people flocked to the playhouses.

In the map of London of 1770 of which we have spoken, only two theatres are marked, those of Drury Lane and Covent Garden, and in addition the Opera House in the Haymarket. These were licensed by the Lord Chamberlain, who claimed despotic authority over playhouse and players. He could and did shut up the theatres for six weeks when the King died, and closed Drury Lane on poor Dick Steele after he had acquired a patent for it, and was already handicapped by a hated rival in Lincoln's Inn Fields. The Lord Chamberlain, then as now, was the licenser of plays, and he was heartily abused for his selection.

Why, it was asked, did he refuse Gay's "Polly" and license pieces of lewd immorality?

Like other authority in the eighteenth century that of the Lord Chamberlain was often flouted. Theatres sprang up without his authority or knowledge. Plays would be given and termed rehearsals, and the tickets for them could be bought at a shop or tavern hard by the playhouse.

Foote the actor would invite his friends to a dish of tea, and then they might chance to see his company performing in "The Lane Lover" or "The Devil on Two Sticks."

As long as the proper fees were paid, it was said that the authorities cared little about the morals of the piece. When Fielding put Sir Robert Walpole upon the stage, bribing his placemen with both hands, the Government felt it was time to interfere. A new Bill was introduced to strengthen the hands of the Lord Chamberlain, to explain and amend the act of Queen Anne, relating to rogues, vagabonds, sturdy beggars and vagrants. With this class of persons the actor was technically classed, but his hold on the hearts of the English playgoing public was too great for him to be ostracised.

Smith, the actor who took the original part of Charles Surface, married Lord Sandwich's sister. He had certainly the advantage of being educated at Eton, and sent down from Cambridge for firing blank cartridges at a proctor. He was known in the profession as Gentleman Smith, and his politeness, we are told, "was proverbial."

In France the body of Adrienne Lecouvreur was thrown out upon a dung-hill, in England the corpse of Nance Oldfield lay in state in the Jerusalem Chamber, and was carried to her tomb in Westminster Abbey with peers for her pall-bearers. She was, as was well known, General Churchill's mistress; but she went to court, and when the Princess of Wales tactlessly asked her if she were married, she replied airily, "It is said so; but we have not owned it yet."

She and Mrs. Prichard, Peg Woffington, Mrs. Clive, Mrs. Cibber, and a host of others were the darlings of the pit and gallery.

Betterton, who died in 1710, was lauded by Pope and Steele. Garrick was the friend of all the literary men in London, and "the town," Gay said, "was horn mad about him."

"This is being *sur un assez bon ton* for a player," Walpole remarked, when he dined at Garrick's and the company

"consisted of a Lord Chamberlain, a groom of the stole, and the wife of a secretary of state."

The more Puritan section of the community still eschewed the theatre and it was thought unbecoming in a clergyman to be seen there.

"The fleering coxcombs in the pit," says Swift, speaking of a performance at the opera, where some clergymen were present, "amused themselves with making discoveries and spreading the names of these gentlemen. I shall not pretend to vindicate a clergyman who would appear openly in his habit at a theatre, among such a vicious crew as would probably stand round him, and at such lewd comedies and profane tragedies as are often represented; but when Lord Chancellors who are Keepers of the King's conscience, when judges of the land, whose title is *reverend*, when ladies who are bound by the rules of their sex to the strictest decency, appear in the theatre without censure, I cannot understand why a young clergyman, who goes concealed out of curiosity to see an innocent and moral play should be so highly condemned."

The eighteenth-century ideas about innocent and moral plays were curious. The indecencies of Wycherley were tolerated while Shakespeare was considered very gross. The "Beggars' Opera" itself was regarded by many as most immoral. Garrick was the player who brought Shakespeare into favour; but Garrick, as Pope said, "never had his equal as an actor." He did not use the high-sounding declamation of the older actors, but spoke naturally with pathos and with humour.

Cumberland describes the change :

"I have the spectacle even now as it were, before my eyes. Quin presented himself upon the rising of the curtain, in a green velvet coat, embroidered down the seams, an enormous full-bottomed periwig, rolled stockings, and high heeled, square toed shoes. With very little variation of cadence, and in a deep full tone, accompanied by a sawing kind of action which had more of the senate than of the stage in it, he rolled out his heroism with an air of dignified indifference, and

seemed to disdain the plaudits that were bestowed upon him. Mrs. Cibber, in a key high pitched but sweet withal, sung or rather recitativèd Row's harmonious strain, something in the manner of an improvisation; it was so extremely wanting in contrast that though it did not wound the ear, it wearied it. . . . But when, after long and eager expectation I first beheld little Garrick . . . it seemed as if a whole century had been swept over in the transition of a single scene."

Even Garrick, though he acted seventeen Shakespearean parts, did not always give his audience the Bard undiluted. He gave them plays called "Florizel and Perdita," and "Catherine and Petruchio," he turned "The Tempest" into an opera, and made a pretty thing called "The Fairies" out of "A Midsummer Night's Dream."

Shakespeare's plays began to be the fashion. They were not to be compared, perhaps, with Home's "Douglas," or the "Good-natured Man," but "Hamlet" was well received at Drury Lane even by the galleries, "though without their favourite acquaintances the gravediggers," who were considered rather gross.

When Mrs. Siddons played her great part of Lady Macbeth, or acted as Desdemona, Rosalind or Queen Catherine, all London flocked to see her, and the town applauded when "a young gentlewoman, a Mrs. Robinson, acted Juliet." No more was heard of the grossness and barbarity of Shakespeare.

"The truth of it is," as Steele remarked in the *Tatler*, "the politeness of our English stage in regard to decorum is very extraordinary.

"When poor Sandford was upon the stage I have seen him groaning upon a wheel, stuck with daggers, impaled alive, calling his executioners, with a dying voice cruel dogs and villains. And all this to please his judicious spectators, who were wonderfully delighted with seeing a man in torment so well acted."

On the whole Garrick chose his plays and his players wisely, though he had trouble with some of his caste. Three actresses, it was said, Yates, Abingdon and Young, drove him from the

stage by their jealousy and quarrels, and their frequent refusal to play this part or that.

Garrick took great pains with the setting and illumination of his pieces. He introduced footlights. They consisted of about sixteen candles, and had to be constantly snuffed by an attendant, who was retained for that purpose, but they were a useful addition to the candelabras which hung over the stage. He was also particular about costume. There was no straining after archaic dress, his Macbeth wore the uniform of an English general, but he insisted that the costume should be splendid. Great nobles and even monarchs gave their cast-off robes to the players.

Mrs. Bellamy and Peg Woffington wore dresses that had belonged to the Princess of Wales, and Munden acquired an ancient and splendid coat which had been George II's. These are a few among the effects which, according to the *Tatler*, were to be sold off by the management of Drury Lane :

“Spirits of right Nantz Brandy for lambent flames and apparitions.

“3 bottles and a half of lightning; one shower of snow in the whitest French paper; two showers of a browner sort.

“A sea, consisting of a dozen large waves the tenth bigger than ordinary and a little damaged.

“A dozen and a half of clouds, trimmed with black and well conditioned, a rainbow a little faded.

“A new moon something decayed.

“A coach very finely guilt and little used with a pair of dragons to be sold cheap.

“A setting sun, a pennyworth.

“An imperial mantle made for Cyrus the Great, and worn by Julius Cæsar, Bajazet, King Henry VIII and Signor Valentini.

“A basket-hilted sword very convenient to carry milk in.

“The imperial robes of Xerxes, never worn but once.

“A wild boar killed by Mrs. Tofts and Dioclesian.

“A serpent to sting Cleopatra.

“A mustard bowl to make thunder with.

“The complexion of a murderer in a bandbox, consisting of a large piece of burnt cork, and a coal black peruke.

## AMUSEMENTS

"A suit of clothes for a ghost, viz. a bloody shirt, a doublet curiously pinked and a coat with three great eyelet holes upon the breast."

In older times the members of the audience had sat upon stools and benches upon the stage. In the eighteenth century they were accommodated with seats at the sides. Garrick sought to abolish this custom, and it is surprising that it should ever have been instituted. It must have much curtailed available space, and the view from the pit was obviously far better.

Advertising cost the manager little or nothing. Editors would pay as much as £200 a year for the privilege of inserting his theatrical notices in their papers.

"Yesterday morning," says a newspaper of 1777, "Mrs. Sheridan was delivered of a son. The mother and child are likely to do well. In the evening of the same day, Mr. Sheridan's Muse was delivered of a bantling which is likely to live for ever."

This bantling was "School for Scandal."

In addition to such advertisements, the playbills were affixed to the posts by the river stairs from which the audience might take boat or wherry. Sometimes they were announced by criers to the accompaniment of drum and trumpet, or boys might be sent round the town to shout some doggerel lines such as the following street song of 1776 :

So nowadays as 'twas in Gay's  
The world's run mad agen-a  
From morn till night its whole delight  
To cry up 'The Duenna.'

The performance in Garrick's time began about six, and the audience was given plenty for its money. After a tragedy or sentimental comedy it clamoured for something gay and amusing, and so the pantomime would be tacked on at the end of "Hamlet" or "The History of George Barnwell." It was a curious mixture of Roman and Greek mythology, music and dancing, with plenty of knock-about farce and

## COST OF SEATS

topical allusions. It was not primarily designed for children, though no doubt they delighted in it as much as the London apprentices who surged in at half-price about nine o'clock.

Towards the end of the century special efforts were made with the pantomime at Christmas time, and we hear of a "Robinson Crusoe," with no less a person than Sheridan as Man Friday.

The prices remained for a long time what they had been in the reign of Charles II. The boxes were 4*s.*, the pit 2*s.* 6*d.* and the galleries 1*s.* 6*d.* and 1*s.* As expenses increased and actresses demanded such great salaries as five guineas a week, it was resolved to raise the cost of seats. This led to the O.P. (Old Prices) riots, and a compromise was reached. The people in the boxes and the pit, the quality, that is to say, and the men of letters, who were not likely to riot and wreck the house, were charged 7*s.* and 3*s.* for their respective seats. The gods in the upper gallery, who were apt to throw about bricks and bags of soot, were told that they need not pay more than their shilling.

The worst offenders in the theatre were the footmen who came early to the house to secure seats for their masters. It had become the custom to give them free seats in the upper gallery, where they disturbed the whole audience by their brawls and clamour.

They roar so loud, you'd think behind the stairs  
Tom Dove and all his brotherhood of bears.  
They've grown a nuisance beyond all disasters,  
We're none so great but their unpaying masters.  
We beg you, sirs, to beg your men that they  
Would please to give us leave to hear the play.

Fleetwood, the manager of Drury Lane, tried to exclude them ; but the footmen came in a body 300 strong armed with clubs and broke into the theatre. They took possession of the stage and fought all who dared to oppose them. The Riot Act was read, the military were called out, and about thirty of the ringleaders were lodged in gaol. Though the footmen were suppressed, the gallery could still raise a riot if anything

## AMUSEMENTS

displeased it. The villain of the piece was greeted with shouts and cat-calls, and an unpopular play could be hissed off the boards.

Between the acts women walked about the house selling oranges and apples, and these were frequently used as missiles to pelt an unfortunate player.

"Gentlemen are respectfully intreated," so ran a notice in the gallery, "not to throw stone bottles over the rail, as this practice has been found to cause inconvenience to those in the pit."

The run of a play was very short, for when there were only two regular theatres in the whole of London, a frequent change of piece was absolutely necessary.

Goldsmith's "Good-natured Man," quite a popular play, only ran for ten nights. The author received £400 for it, and evidently it drew full houses, for it was the custom to assign the playwright the third night's profit. If it ran after three nights, he would draw the takings on the sixth and ninth evenings as well. There were, of course, no matinées. An afternoon performance and the introduction of the seats called stalls were innovations of the nineteenth century.

The Opera House in the eighteenth century was situated on the west side of the Haymarket. It was built by Vanbrugh in 1705, and was used for the performance of Italian opera, being then known as the Queen's Theatre. It was a very large house having no less than five tiers of boxes. At the Opera House, besides the operas were held the *ridottos*, assemblies for dancing and music, which afterwards became so popular at Ranelagh.

Another amusement which attracted large crowds were Mrs. Salmon's Waxworks hard by the Temple. The effigy of a beefeater and a match-woman kept guard at the door. The beefeater was resplendent in the appropriate costume, and the match-seller a venerable old woman on crutches with a basket of matches. She was dressed in a plain gingham gown, with a book-muslin apron and mittens to her elbow. These effigies were an immense attraction to



the country cousin who had perhaps come to see the figures on St. Dunstan's Church hard by. He paid his 6*d.* and went through the shop downstairs, where Mrs. Salmon sold tops and marbles and Punch and Judies as a side line. Upstairs he found himself in a candle-lit room amid a crowd of waxworks, George III and Queen Charlotte, the Prince of Wales, General Wolfe and Dr. Johnson and John Wilkes, with a cracked nose. Whitefield was side by side with bishops and Wesley seemed to be holding converse with Dick Turpin.

In another room there was a pastoral scene of shepherds and shepherdesses making love among the lambs and goats, and a wax model of a man-of-war sailing on a sea of glass.

Our own exhibition of waxworks is extremely popular, so it is no wonder that eighteenth-century Londoners flocked to Mrs. Salmon's. They would pay money for other and far tamer delights. The new iron bridge erected at Paddington Green attracted quite a crowd, and persons were charged 1*s.* each for the privilege of seeing it. A shoemaker charged 2*d.* for a sight of the shoes which he had made for one of the beautiful Gunnings, and made quite a good thing out of it.

George II, though his powers of enjoyment seem to have been circumscribed and gross, had his master of the revels. This remarkable man was the son of a Swiss pastor named Heidigger. In spite of his foreign birth, he became a power in the world of London entertainment. He came to England as the servant of a nobleman, obtained the post of manager of the Opera House, and of the King's Theatre, and was recognised as a critic of plays and operas. His advice was sought upon such matters as stage lighting and decoration, and he was called into consultation when a great nobleman wished to give a particularly lavish and splendid entertainment. He enormously improved the masquerades, which before his time had been poor tawdry affairs. Heidigger was not popular, though a very generous man, with an income of £5,000 a year. Pope and Fielding satirised him, and Hogarth seems to impute the decline of the theatre to his preference for other entertainments.

## AMUSEMENTS

Another foreigner, who catered for the pleasures of the rich, was Teresa Cornelys, a German. She had a large house in Soho Square where she provided masquerades, balls and concerts for those who subscribed. As many as five hundred persons came to her parties, and the windows in the square were filled by sightseers. Scandalous things began to be whispered about the foreigner. The Pantheon was opened and took away many of her clients, and after a period in the Fleet, Mrs. Cornelys might have been found selling asses' milk in Knightsbridge.

Of the Tower Menagerie we have already spoken, Pennant tells us that,

"The Tower Menagery is to this day exceedingly well supplied. In April 1787 there was a leopard of a quite unknown species, brought from Bengal. It was wholly black, but the hair was marked on the back, neck and sides with round clusters of small spots of a glossy and most intense black. The tail hung several inches beyond the length of the legs and was very full of hair. There was also two tigers, one had been there some time and its ground colour had faded into a pale sickly sandiness, the other young and vigorous and almost fresh from its native woods was almost of an orange colour and its black stripes and the white parts were most pure in their kinds."

Count Manteuffel who had visited the menagerie in 1781 "found the poor beasts very badly housed."

There was also a menagerie known as Pidman's Exhibition of Wild Beasts to be seen at Exeter Change in the Strand. Here for 2s. 6d. a variety entertainment might be enjoyed, as well as the sight of the helpless animals in small cages upstairs, the walls being painted with appropriate jungle scenery.

All lovers of animals must be glad that the circus and the menagerie are losing their hold upon the public taste. The eighteenth century, however, loved such shows, and cared very little for the cruelty involved.

This taste was gratified by Philip Astley, who opened his circus near Westminster Bridge towards the end of the century.

## MENAGERIES AND COCK-FIGHTS

Before his time there had been no regular circus in London, though there were exhibitions of wild beasts and performing animals.

When Jonathan Binns came to London in 1772 he went to many of the sights and "saw also in the Tower, a variety of Wild Beasts as Lyons, Tigers, Wolves, etc." He also

"went to see the Elephants by the Queen's Palace, they are two in no. and belong to the Queen. I gave them some apples which they eat. One of them upon the Keeper's taking up a whip as if he would beat it, laid down when some of the company sat upon it, when they got off, it rose, and with as much ease as many horses."

This is a delightful description of the animals. Too often we find such horrible advertisements as this : "At the desire of several persons of quality, a leopard twelve feet in length to be baited to death, and gentlemen who choose to risk their dogs, are allowed to assist."

There were gardens at Bankside in Soho, and in Tothill fields where such revolting sports could be witnessed, and at Hockley in the Hole in Clerkenwell, a place of infamous repute. Leopards and tigers were sometimes baited ; but more usually the animals chosen were bears, bulls or lions.

A cock-fight was another popular spectacle. There were cockpits at Westminster, in Drury Lane, and Jewin Street, and one in Birdcage Walk which was depicted by Hogarth. His audience is characteristically horrible, but the sport attracted the lowest, and the bully and the cutpurse rubbed shoulders with the man of fashion. A kind of rough justice seems to have been meted out. In *The Times* of 1797 we read : "If a man should happen to make a bet which he is not able to answer he is put into a basket and pulled up to the ceiling where he remains suspended during the sport."

The pits were circular in shape, and there was a stage in the middle, covered with matting, and railed so that the birds should not slip.

A number of birds was usually set to fight, and this was

## AMUSEMENTS

known as a "main" of cocks. In these contests the bird which won most encounters was victor.

In a Welsh main, eight pairs were matched against each other, the eight victors being paired, the four conquerors, and finally the surviving pair.

There was also the "battle royal" in which a number of birds were "set" or put into the pit, and allowed to remain there until one cock had killed or disabled all the others.

It is curious that various phrases taken from the cockpit still remain in our language. "This beats cockfighting" is an expression which has almost died out; but we still talk of a "battle royal," and the "main chance," and being "fed like a fighting cock."

If the eighteenth century liked horrible contests between animals it also loved to watch boxing and fencing matches, and bouts of quarter-staff, single stick and cutlass play.

Every gentleman learned to fence as a matter of course. The Angelos, father and son, kept their famous fencing school in Soho, to which all the men of fashion flocked. The art of swordsmanship was a necessity in the days when duelling flourished; but it seldom became a public spectacle like boxing or quarter-staff. The exponent of the latter sport, James Figg, who had established himself in a piece of waste ground hard by the Oxford Road, has been immortalised by John Byrom.

Long was the great Figg by the prizefighting swains  
Sole monarch acknowledged of Marylebone plains  
To the towns far and near did his valour extend  
And swam down the river from Thame to Gravesend.  
Where lived Mr. Sutton, piemaker by trade, who, hearing that Figg  
was thought such a stout blade,  
Resolved to put in for a share of his fame  
And so sent to challenge the champion of Thame.  
Figg struck the first stroke and with such a rash fury  
That he broke his huge weapon in twain I assure 'ee.  
And if his brave rival this blow had not warded  
His head from his shoulders had been quite discarded.  
Figg armed him again and they took t'other tilt.  
And then Sutton's blade ran away from its hilt.

## THE PRIZE RING

The weapons were frightened but as for the men  
In truth they ne'er minded, but at it again.

Then after that bout they went on to another  
But the matter must end in some fashion or other.  
So Jove told the gods, he had made a decree  
That Figg should hit Sutton a stroke on the knee.  
Though Sutton disabled as soon as he hit him  
Would still have fought on, but Jove would not permit him.  
'Twas his Fate not his fault that constrained him to yield  
And thus the great Figg became Lord of the field

Figg died in 1734 and was succeeded by Broughton, who, regarding quarter-staff as a nasty dangerous amusement, instituted boxing matches instead. He is said to have invented boxing gloves; but they were only used for practice, all prizefights being fought with bare fists.

Broughton, who was the champion of England, drew up the rules by which such fights were conducted; but they were brutal contests, and the accounts which have come down to us make nauseating reading. There were no Queensberry Rules, and professional bruisers had often little notions of honour or fair play.

Boxing or bruising matches as they were called, were enormously popular. An English mob burst into the paddock to see the fight between Humphreys and the Jew Mendoza, although several ex-prizefighters and other strong men armed with clubs endeavoured to keep them out.

The annual register for 1788 gives an account of this match. It only lasted twenty-nine minutes, a pleasant contrast to some contests which dragged on with sickening brutality for hours. Mendoza was defeated, and "it is said," the paper declares, "that £20,000 sterling of bets will be transferred from the Jews to the Christians—rather to the Gentiles."

"Being a person of insatiable curiosity," says Addison in the *Spectator*, "I could not forbear going on Wednesday last to a place of no small renown for the gallantry of the lower orders of Briton, namely: to the Bear Garden at Hockley in the Hole; where as a whitish brown paper put into my hands in the street, informed me there was to be a trial of

skill to be exhibited between two masters of the noble science of self defence at two o'clock precisely. I was not a little charmed with the solemnity of the challenge which ran thus :

"I James Miller, Sergeant (lately come from the frontiers of Portugal), master of the noble science of self defence, hearing in most places where I have been of the great fame of Timothy Buck of London, master of the said science, do invite him to meet me and exercise at the several weapons following, viz. backsword, sword and dagger, sword and buckler, single falchin, case of falchins, quarter staff."

To this invitation Timothy Buck returned the following answer :

"I Timothy Buck of Clare Market, master of the noble art of self defence, hearing he did fight Mr. Parkes of Coventry, will not fail (God Willing) to meet this fair inviter at the time and place appointed, desiring a clear stage and no favour."

We are not told what weapons were used, but we hear of the clash of swords. Miller, though he was six foot eight, seems to have got the worst of it. His wound "was exposed to the view of all who could delight in it," says Addison, "and was sewn up on the stage." "We see people," he adds, "take a certain painful gratification in beholding these encounters. Is it cruelty that administers these sorts of delight?"

Cricket seems to have been played in England from very early times. Chamberlain and Strype include it among the games which were played in the eighteenth century, and it seems to have been popular in and around London. There were cricket matches at Chelsea, on White's Conduit Fields, on Lamb's Conduit Fields, and on the Artillery ground at Finsbury, where the H.A.C. now plays. Here in 1744 was played the great matches between Kent and All England. Twenty thousand persons, it was said, crowded to see it, and the landlord of the Pye House Inn, to whom the field belonged, raised his gate money from 2*d.* to 6*d.*

A few years later Thomas Lord, who had been ground bowler to the club at White's Conduit Fields, opened a new

ground in the neighbourhood of Dorset Square. Here the Hambledon Club, which had beaten an All England Eleven on Broadhalfpenny Down by an innings and 168 runs, played its last match. The Marylebone Cricket Club was founded in 1788, and in the first year of its existence set about altering some of the rules of cricket. As late as 1820, as we may see in one of Rowlandson's drawings, cricket was played at Lord's with only two stumps at each end. The pitch was usually the same length as at present, but the crease was not painted on the grass but was cut into the ground. The bat was curved, and was something like a wide hockey stick. It was apparently as light as a child's toy. Mrs. Rishton begs Fanny Burney to buy two cricket bats for Mr. Rishton, who was very keen on the game. They were to be made by Pett of Sevenoaks. "You will get them," she says, "at any of the great toy shops, the maker's name always stamped upon them. Ask for the very best sort which cost 4*s.* or 4*s.* 6*d.* each. Let them weigh 4 oz. or 4 oz. and a quarter or 4oz. and a half each."

With such light curved bats it was impossible to block, the player must have run out and hit everything. John Small of the Hambledon Club was the first man who brought a straight bat on to the field. He had some peculiar strokes of his own, which he could not execute with a curved bat. After this bats tended to become wider and wider, until it was almost impossible for the bowler to get any wickets at all. The width of the bat was then fixed at four and half inches. There was no particular dress for cricket, though towards the end of the century some players affected red breeches, and the umpires often wore scarlet coats.

Cricket is almost the only sport nowadays which is not afflicted with the betting craze. In the eighteenth century men betted upon cricket as they betted upon everything else, and the spectators could be as unruly and violently partisan as some football crowds at the present day.

As for football, Joseph Strutt, writing in 1801, dismisses it in a few words. "It was formerly," he says, "much in

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vogue among the common people ; though of late years, it seems to have fallen into disrepute and is little practised." The boys at the Charterhouse played a sort of football in their London playground, and probably other youths kicked a ball about in courts and alleys, but it was not until the middle of the nineteenth century that it took its place as a national game.



## DRESS AND FASHIONS

A FULL account of the dress and fashions of the eighteenth century would fill volumes and might be extremely tedious. We are struck all through the century, till the time of the French revolution which brought simpler fashions, with the extreme elaboration of clothes.

It began with the head. In Queen Anne's reign the immense full-bottomed wig was still worn. It was extremely hot and heavy, and impeded the movements even more than the tight clothes which were often worn with it. A man walked slowly or drove in a coach if there was a high wind. He could not play tennis or fence or ride to hounds in one of these monstrosities. If he played or hunted he often enveloped his bare head in a night-cap, or wore caps with flaps over the ears. The wig was discarded at a duel, and the cavalry in Marlborough's battles lost their wigs at the commencement of the charge. These huge periwigs went out of fashion early in the century, but they were followed by others.

William Philips, who professed to "manufacture all his own hairs," had a variety of wigs. His scratches and bob wigs cost 14s., but grizzle majors were 25s. and grizzle ties a guinea. The old periwigs had sometimes cost £50, which was an enormous sum in those days.

No wonder that the highwayman, when he stopped a coach, snatched at such an easy and valuable prey. No hat would sit conveniently on the top of an enormous wig, and most men carried them under their arms. They were handed down from father to son, until at last they became so old fashioned that they were given to the coachman.

Coachmen wore wigs well into the next century, as did the

bishops. The last resort of the old wig was the shoeblack's box, for there was nothing so good for polishing shoes. Before that it may have fallen into the 6*d.* lottery in Rosemary Lane. Here a man might take a 6*d.* ticket, and fish out what he could get from a basket full of wigs.

Why did men wear what must have been very hot, very uncomfortable and quite expensive? It has been suggested that a man could thereby conceal his age. There was no grey hair, no bald head to suggest that the wearer was not in his prime. This may have made the wig popular among the fops, but it is scarcely likely that grave and learned judges and sound, elderly business men were trying to appear youthful.

In an age when dirt and vermin were everywhere the wig certainly kept the head clean and free from pests, though there were little insects which lived in wigs, but this argument did not weigh much with those who were soon to introduce the messy, unhygienic habit of powdering the hair. The fact is that men were as much the slaves of fashion as women. Their dress was often splendid.

"My wardrobe," wrote one fine gentleman, "consisted of five fashionable coats full mounted, two of which were plain, one of velvet, one trimmed with gold, and another with silver lace, two frocks, one of white drab, with large plate buttons, the other of blue with gold binding; one waistcoat of gold brocade, one of blue satin embroidered with silver, one of green silk trimmed with broad figured gold lace, one of black silk with fringes, one of white satin, one of black cloth, one of scarlet; six pair of cloth breeches, one pair of crimson and another of black velvet, twelve pair of white silk stockings, as many of black silk and the same number of fine cotton, one hat laced with gold point d'Espagne, another with silver lace scalloped, a third with gold binding and a fourth plain; three dozen of fine ruffled shirts, as many neckcloths, one dozen of cambric handkerchiefs, and the like number of silk. A gold watch with a chased case, two valuable diamond rings, two mourning swords, one with a silver handle, and a fourth cut steel inlaid with gold, a diamond stock buckle, and a set of stone buckles for the knees and shoes; a pair of silver mounted

pistols with rich housings a gold headed cane and a snuff box of tortoise shell mounted with gold with a picture of a lady on the top."

The cost of such dress and accessories was enormous. No wonder that men of fashion often paid or owed their tailors hundreds of pounds. The two buttons on the back of a man's coat are the remains of an eighteenth-century fashion. When a gentleman rode he fastened up the long tails of his elaborate coat to the buttons provided for that purpose. In the country or for hunting or travelling a plainer suit might be worn, but in town, at least, a gentleman must be smart.

Peers and Knights of the Garter wore their decorations everywhere. Dr. Johnson was disgusted when he met Lord Bolingbroke in a plain coat, and Horace Walpole in his old age complained of the "dirty shirts and shaggy hair of the young men who have levelled nobility."

The wearing of the sword among gentlemen was also universal, though as the century became more civilised a small dress sword was worn on social occasions. The "nice conduct of a clouded cane" was also essential at balls or routs.

There is a dissertation on canes in the *Tatler*. We are told how Sir Timothy Shallow and Tom Empty both bought canes, apparently identical, the baronet paying ten guineas for his, and Tom Empty five. When Sir Timothy remonstrated with the vendor, the latter explained the difference.

"Lord, Sir Timothy, I am concerned that you, whom I took to understand canes better than any baronet in town, should be so overseen. Why, Sir Timothy, yours is a true jambee and Squire Empty's only a plain dragon."

Wigs and powdered hair necessitated a clean-shaven face and the trade of the barber flourished. Powder took the place of the wig, and when Pitt put his tax upon hair powder during the war with France, he was careful to exempt some of the poorer gentry, to whom the wearing of it was a social necessity. The clergyman having an income of less than £100 a year, ensigns and lieutenants, and their equivalent

ranks in the senior service and all daughters in a family except the two eldest were freed from the tax.

The *Spectator* discusses the old fashion of growing a beard, but dismisses the idea as being too costly.

"There is no question," says the writer, "but the beaux would soon provide themselves with false ones of the lightest colours and the most immoderate lengths. A fair beard, of the tapestry size, Sir Roger seems to approve, could not come under twenty guineas. . . . We are not certain that the ladies would not come into the mode, when they take the air on horse back. They already appear in hats and feathers, coats and periwigs, and I see no reason why we may not suppose that they would have their riding beards on the same occasion."

Men were always professing themselves as shocked at the riding dress of the women, and at the general folly and extravagance of their attire. There were few criticisms of men's fashions, and they were sometimes as foolish and extraordinary as the women's. Men flaunted nosegays of artificial flowers and thrust their hands into muffs, though good old Jonas Hanway was jeered at for carrying such an effeminate thing as an umbrella. They padded their calves, if they thought them too lean, and some of the gentlemen at the King's ball, "pretty creatures," says Mrs. Carter, "were trimmed with point and blond lace. Pray had any of the ladies swords and bag wigs?" she asks.

During the Seven Years' War there were advertised "Campain boxes for officers fitted with eau-de-luce, rouge, perfumed pomatum, powder puffs, lip salve, and ivory eyebrow combs."

Men and women plastered themselves with cosmetics and sometimes died martyrs to the fashion. White lead was an ingredient in many of the preparations; but though doctors might warn and moralists preach, the fashion continued.

The *Spectator* is much concerned about the folly of women's clothes. When war was raging in France they would have their fashions from Paris "which the milliners took care to

furnish them with by means of a jointed baby that came regularly over, once a month habited after the manner of the most eminent toasts of Paris."

"I am credibly informed," says Addison, "that even in the hottest time of the war, the sex made several efforts and raised large contributions towards the importation of the wooden Mademoiselle."

He goes on to tell us how he went to the house of Mrs. Betty Cross-Stitch in King Street, Covent Garden, to see the puppet, who

"was dressed in a cherry coloured gown and petticoat, with a short working apron over it, which discovered her to the most advantage. Her hair was cut up and divided very prettily, with several ribbons stuck up and down in it. The milliner assured me that her complexion was such as was worn by all the ladies of the last fashion in Paris. . . . The shop-maid who is a pert wench said that Mademoiselle had something very curious in the tying of her garters, but as I pay due respect even to a pair of sticks when they are in petticoats, I did not examine into that particular."

Garters could be very elaborate with mottos embroidered or woven into them.

"Pray keep me tight from morn till night," was one of them. "It is a gross piece of immodesty," we read in a book upon manners, "to tuck up the skirt while standing near the fire. It amounts to an exhibition of stockings and garters."

You might, however, without any impropriety, "have your dress in your pockets." The front of the gown was gathered at the waist by a drawstring. It opened at the hips, and so the two corners of the dress might be thrust into the pockets which were in the underslip. This was a useful proceeding when walking in the muddy streets or busied with housework.

The hoop came in in the reign of Queen Anne, and went in and out of fashion during the century. The fashion is said to have been brought from some little German state where the farthingale of the sixteenth century was still the

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customary wear. The hoop at first was made of cane or willow ; but these rather clumsy materials were presently replaced by whalebone, and the hoop, which had been a kind of cage fastened together by strings or ribbons, was covered with cloth or silk. It was very cool in summer, admitting a free circulation of air, but its devotees said nothing about the draught in winter.

"It was no more a petticoat," we are told, "than Diogenes's tub was his breeches." Hoops could be enormous in size and must have been a most intolerable nuisance. Drawing-room doors were enlarged to admit the monstrosity, coaches were made bigger to carry it.

The head-dresses in the reign of Queen Anne were also gigantic, though, according to the *Spectator*, the fashion did not last long.

"There is not so variable a thing in nature as a lady's head dress, within my own memory I have known it to rise and fall 30 degrees. About ten years ago it shot up to a very great height, insomuch that the female part of our species, were much taller than the men. The women were of such enormous stature that we appeared as grasshoppers before them. At present the whole sex is in a measure dwarfed and shrunk into a race of beauties that seem almost another species. I remember several ladies, who were once very near seven foot high, that at present want some inches of five."

Roofs had been taken off Sedan chairs to admit these enormous erections.

They went out of fashion, as Addison tells us, but came in again in all their glory and horror later in the century.

We read in *The Times* of 1795 that : "A young lady only ten feet high was overset in one of the late gales of wind in Portland Place, and the upper mast of her feather blown upon Hampstead Hill." She had been wearing, no doubt, one of those immense erections of wool and horse-hair and false curls, overlaid with a paste of powder, ornamented with flower gardens, men-of-war, postchaises or birds of paradise.

The discomfort of these head-dresses by day must have

been sufficiently great; but at night they were intolerable. Few ladies could afford the time to have these horrible things redressed every day. They lay with them in cases, and even then the mice got at them. There is a story told of a little girl in church watching with fascinated eyes the mouse which popped in and out of the head-dress of the lady in front of her.

In 1777 the Society of Arts offered a prize for the most elegant and useful mousetrap for the pillow, and finally a pretty thing in silver was put upon the market at three guineas. There were also silver wire night-caps which were "so strong no mouse or even rat can gnaw through them."

Of underclothing very little need be said, as very little was worn. A man wore a shirt and a pair of stockings, a woman a shift or smock and a petticoat, though the latter was really part of her dress. The shift was worn in bed, when anything was worn there at all, and what was known in the eighteenth century as a nightgown, was not a nightgown at all. It was a simple sort of dress, usually worn by ladies in the morning.

"My real design," said Swift, writing to Mrs. Howard, "is that when the Princess asks you where you got that fine night gown, you are to say it is an Irish plaid sent you by the Dean of St. Patrick's."

The riding habit was also worn in the morning or when travelling. At one time indeed it became the fashion to wear it on every occasion, and Fanny Burney found ladies thus attired at a ball. The long habit, heavy and clumsy as we should now find it, was less troublesome, and certainly far more economical, than the elaborate dress of the age.

When the hoop finally disappeared and flimsy materials became the fashion, decency prescribed something more in the way of underclothing. Drawers became a necessity and the petticoat was a separate garment. A few fine ladies had adopted the French custom of wearing a trimmed linen gown in bed, and the fashion gradually spread, though the poorer classes never adopted it.

Among the well-to-do underclothing was always made of linen. Men's shirts were most elaborately frilled and even

embroidered, and stockings were hand knitted. Until nearly the middle of the century women's stockings could be of any colour; but then a fashion came in for wearing white ones. Loud were the outcries of the moralists who thought that white stockings gave a suggestion of nudity which was truly shocking. Fashion, however, has withstood many such onslaughts and white stockings were worn for a very long time.

In some cases clothes indicated the politics of the wearer. Pitt's supporters wore scarlet waistcoats, and those of Fox wore buff. Tory ladies had patches on the right cheek, and the Whigs on the left.

"About the middle of last winter," says Addison, "I went to see an opera at the theatre in the Haymarket where I could not but take notice of two parties of very fine women that had placed themselves on the opposite side boxes and seemed drawn up in a sort of battle array one against another. I found they were patched differently, the faces on the one hand being spotted on the right side of the forehead, and those upon the other on the left. . . . In the middle boxes between these two opposite bodies were several ladies who patched indifferently on both sides of their faces and seemed to sit there with no other intention but to see the opera. . . . In a late draught of marriage articles a lady has stipulated with her husband that whatever his opinions are she shall be at liberty to patch on which side she pleases."

"A good subject," Lady Louisa Stuart complained, "cannot be dressed in these days under one hundred pounds."

She was referring to the gown she had to get for the birthday ball after King George's recovery. It had

"a white satin body and petticoat with a white and gold belt, and white and gold bands round the arm, half sleeves of crêpe, plaited, and a crêpe festoon, trimmed with blonde and tied up with two gold tassels on the shoulders. The train consists of five breadths of crêpe, bound with white satin ribband, not joined, but one put on over the other to look as if there were two stripes of white satin at the end of each breadth. It meets before and is tied back on each side like a robe with gold cord and tassels. There is a crêpe flounce



round the petticoat. The cap is plain crêpe with a bandeau of white satin, and 'God save the King' on it in gold spangles and four very high feathers on the other side, value six guineas."

Mary Moser, the artist, invited a friend "to come to London and admire our plumes; we sweep the sky. A Duchess wears six feathers, a lady four and every milkmaid one at each corner of her hat."

Miss Talbot goes to a masquerade as a Roumanian peasant, and is appropriately dressed in a "full moon cap, diamond ear rings, and a gaudy negligée."

We hear of such materials as paduasos, which were silk stuffs, originally made at Padua, plain and watered tabbies, worsted tammy, draughts, bombazines and lutestring or lustring. These latter materials were very thin and ephemeral.

Charles Townsend talks of a government that was only likely to last out the summer as "a lutestring ministry."

The scarlet cloak was for many years very fashionable. From its colour it was called a cardinal and when the ladies discarded it, it was still worn by the poor.

Not every woman dressed in extravagant fashions. Lady Carlow asks her sister to send her a cap and tippet "which should be genteel without being violent."

"The French dress," says Lady Louisa Stuart, "is perfectly plain, so bind your gown with ribband, wear no apron, save your money, and tell your neighbours it is the fashion, and in the morning put on your great-coat with what you will under it, provided you have two handkerchiefs big enough for the sails of a large pleasure boat."

Women, however, would still sacrifice themselves to fashion. They starved to get a beautiful figure, they wore damp clothes, so that they might cling the closer in modish elegance, and nearly killed themselves with tight stays.

The children wore much the same type of garments as their parents, but were allowed to keep their own natural hair, and were not afflicted with wigs or powder.

## DRESS AND FASHIONS

Many examples of very lovely fans have come down to us. Made of gauze or silk or chicken skin, they are often most beautifully and elaborately painted. Sometimes, like snuff-boxes, they had two faces, one to be exposed in decorous company and the other side to be used on "gallant adventure." They were brittle things, easily snapping in crowded rooms and sometimes collected by a lady's admirers.

A young man who went much to balls and routs might have a large assortment of fans in his possession.

We have been considering the clothes of the upper classes, the fashionable people, who had nothing to do with the rough and tumble of everyday life, whose attire is thus described in *The Bath Guide*.

In a bandbox is contained  
Painted lawns and chequered shades,  
Crape that's worn by love-lorn maids,  
Watered tabbies, flowered brocades,  
Straw built hats and bonnets green,  
Cat gut gauzes, tippets, ruffs,  
Fans and hoods and feathered muffs,  
Stomachers and Paris nets,  
Ear rings, necklaces, aigrettes,  
Fringes, blouses, mignonettes.  
Fine Vermillion for the cheek,  
Velvet patches à la greque.  
Come, but don't forget the gloves,  
Which with all the smiling loves,  
Venus caught young Cupid picking  
From the tender breast of chicken.

The physician, the lawyer and the clergyman wore plain dark clothes. They kept their wigs when other men had given them up, and until the middle of the century it was customary for a parson to be attired in a cassock.

The doctor had a huge three-tailed periwig, and a gold-headed cane with a pomander at the top. The pomander contained some aromatic essence which was supposed to ward off infection. Dr. Somerville made a sensation at St. George's when he arrived in coloured clothes and with a sword at his side, like any layman. It was the talk of the town. On the

following day he drove to a coffee house, having exchanged wigs with his coachman.

"Here, gentlemen," he observed to the staring crowd, "is an argument to the purpose that knowledge does not consist in exteriors. There is not one of you who would trust me to drive him, and the world shall see as I pass through the streets of London that the wig does not constitute the physician."

After this, it was said, the wig began to go out of fashion among doctors. The barrister was more conservative. He kept his gown and bands and wig, but it is alleged that the gown in the early days of the century had been a coloured one. When Queen Anne died the Bar went into mourning and never came out of it. In dusty chambers, and in the filthy purlieus of Westminster, a black gown was found to be economical and convenient.

The merchant and superior shopkeeper wore, no doubt for the same reason, a black velvet or brown cloth coat, a silk waistcoat, velvet breeches and a hat trimmed with silver lace. They had silver buckles to their shoes, and wore very fine lace ruffles. The rich merchant when he went to the City Assembly or to dine with my lord mayor, would wear clothes as fine, though possibly not so fashionable, as those of a grand gentleman. He was very particular about the whiteness of his linen, and would find it necessary in that dirty city to change his shirt three times a day.

The shopman and mechanic wore a kind of livery when they were engaged in their trade. The carpenter wore a white apron looped at the side, and had a brown paper cap upon his head. The shoemaker wore a short leather apron. The baker was dressed entirely in white and the butcher in blue. The waterman had a sailor's kilt and jersey, and the brewer's drayman a leather apron and a red cap. The apron was worn by all craftsmen, and by shop assistants, excepting those of linen drapers.

Hogarth's apprentices wore long coats, no waistcoats, woollen stockings and thick stocks. His country women and

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the charming shrimp girl wore frocks with tuckers and white caps tied under the chin with hats on the top of them.

Whenever they could the servant and the shop assistant aped their betters, as the eighteenth century expressed it.

“Do we not see,” says Defoe, with his usual reprobation, “fine wigs, fine Holland shirts of six or seven shillings an ell and perhaps laced also, all brought down to the level of the apron, and become the common wear of tradesmen, nay, I may say of tradesmen’s apprentices.”

Smoking was indulged in by working men and at times by their betters. There was smoking at some of the clubs, and notices were pinned on the walls inflicting fines, mop money it was called, on those who spat out of the chimney corner. Long clay pipes were smoked and there were many complaints about the smell of tobacco. Women would not tolerate it, and it never became a universal habit like snuff-taking.

“Who without regret,” says a writer in 1782, who styles himself “A Friend to Female Beauty,” “can see an agreeable and well-dressed lady with a beautiful countenance, elegant symmetry, and fine natural colouring of the features, pull off a glove, and with a fine white delicate hand, take out a box, and put her pretty thumb and finger into a nasty coloured powder and apply the same to a beautiful face and spoil it. . . . Little Miss would never have thought of snuff-taking, if she had not seen her mother and old maiden aunt do it, and Betty the chambermaid, Molly the housemaid and Mrs. Cook would never have thought of buying snuff-boxes but to imitate their mistress.”

Large dark handkerchiefs were sold for snuff-takers. As a rule the handkerchief was merely an elegant trifle and men used their fingers instead.

To the respectable poor the introduction of cheap cotton goods was an immense boon. Holland at six or seven shillings an ell was quite beyond their means. The majority of them wore no underclothing at all, or some filthy linen shirt, or leather petticoat which were worn till they dropped to pieces.

Even when the Government permitted cotton goods to be

sold, the very poor could hardly afford them. There was a large market for old clothes. They were bought by Jews and others from gentlemen's servants and hawked round the streets or sold at the Rag Fair in Rosemary Lane or in Middle Row Holborn or in Monument Street. It was possible to be clothed for 1s. 2d. in the Ratcliff Highway.

The rags and filth of the very poor must have been indescribably horrible. Their miserable garments were sewn around them, fastened by skewers, or tied with string. They often went barefoot or tied straw round their feet and legs to keep out the cold.

Some of this great destitution was no doubt caused by drink and reckless spending. Many of the most wretched supplemented scanty earnings by beggary, or lived entirely upon it. Rags and dirt were thus their stock in trade.

The careful Dutchman and the thrifty German were often amazed and horrified by the dirt and rags of the poorest people. To the Frenchman, however, they appeared for the most part, and as compared with his own nation, neat and well dressed.

## LOTTERIES, GAMBLING, BUBBLES

GAMBLING, with its train of ruin and bankruptcy, was rife in the eighteenth century. It has been loosely stated that everybody gambled, which is, of course, quite untrue. The solid tradesman, the respectable merchant certainly never gambled. Had they done so their credit would have disappeared. They may have played whist for 1s. points, but that is not gambling. The nonconformists and the more serious among the churchpeople frowned upon games of chance. The men and women who gambled belonged generally to one of two classes, to those who had not enough to do and who wanted something exciting wherewith to fill their days, or to the poor who hoped to make a little by some stroke of luck and who welcomed any distraction in their monotonous lives.

“There has lately risen up in our age,” says Defoe, “a new-fangled fantastic credulity . . . whereby the poor, innocent, industrious and unwary people, have been delivered into the ravening and polluted jaws of vultures and tygers.”

There is no doubt that the Government encouraged this love of gambling by floating lotteries on a large scale. It was computed that £346,765 were raised annually in this manner by the State. Sir Hans Sloane's collections were bought with the proceeds of a lottery. An immense number of tickets were sold. At a State lottery in 1779 forty-nine thousand were distributed, and £490,000 were given in prizes. There were two prizes of £20,000, three of £10,000, and about sixteen thousand other prizes ranging from £20 to £5,000. The Government was supposed to have netted over £300,000 by this transaction. It could not, of course, manage the

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lotteries itself. They were farmed out to contractors like so many other things in the eighteenth century.

Members of Parliament, however, expected to make something out of a lottery, as they did out of other things belonging to the State. Packets of five hundred tickets were sold to them cheaply, which they retailed at a profit of £2 a ticket.

The contractors filled their windows with gold pieces and issued flaming advertisements showing how wealth might be won without working for it. The drawing of the lottery was spread over three weeks, during which time excitement grew to a kind of frenzy. Servants, it was said, robbed their masters' houses, journeymen and apprentices pilfered from the till, so that they might have the means to buy a ticket or perhaps an eight or a sixteenth part of a ticket in the forthcoming lottery.

The drawings took place at the Guildhall, or in one of the Companies' Halls in the City, Coopers' Hall being generally chosen. Upon a platform erected at the end of the room sat the Commissioners and their President. Two large structures, surmounted by crowns, looking rather like Sedan chairs, stood at each side of the dais. These were the boxes which contained the numbers of the tickets and the prizes. Two boys from Christ's Hospital were chosen to draw the numbers. One boy on one side thrust his bare arm into the box and drew out a number, and the boy opposite him produced a prize ticket or a blank. The body of the hall was filled with an excited mob. Each man told himself that he might win thousands and live the rest of his life without working.

The Commissioners, no doubt, took every precaution that the drawing of the numbers should be conducted fairly. It was to their interest to do so. On one occasion, however, there was undoubtedly foul play. A certain man, a clerk in a hop factor's office, was brought before the magistrates on the charge of attempting to defraud a lottery contractor. He went to this man's office and put money on a certain number six times over. The contractor was suspicious. Men did not

## LOTTERIES, GAMBLING, BUBBLES

usually pin their faith to one number, they spread themselves over several, if they had the means. He went round to the other offices and found that this number had been heavily insured. The next day the number was drawn at Cooper's Hall Enquiries were made. One of the Bluecoat boys confessed that an unknown man, not the hop factor's clerk, had come to him, and asked him if it were possible to secrete a ticket when he was drawing them. The boy thought that it might be done. Having gained possession of the ticket, he acquainted the unknown man with the number, and then pretended to have drawn it out of the box the next day. We do not hear what happened to the Bluecoat boy. He had only been given half a guinea for the risk he had run and the confederates could have made thousands.

This system of insuring certain tickets was one invented by the lottery office keepers, and might bring in a large sum. The man who had approached the Bluecoat boy absconded, and as it was impossible to prove any connection between him and the hop factor's clerk, the latter was discharged.

"It is possible, if not probable," says Place, writing after lotteries were made illegal in 1826, "that the crimes lottery caused indirectly were as numerous as perhaps two-thirds of all the crimes committed now, taken pro rata with the population."

If the lottery brought evil and misery in its train so did other forms of gambling to an even greater extent. Vast fortunes were lost at faro and hazard. Charles Fox cost his father a thousand guineas a week, and the greater part of this was spent at the tables.

"The ladies," Horace Walpole complained, "game too deep for me. The last time I was in town . . . I lost fifty-six guineas before I could say an Ave Maria. I do not know a teaspoonful of news. I could tell you what was trumps; but that was all I heard."

Walpole disliked gaming. It interfered with pleasant conversation and robbed him of money which he needed for



Strawberry Hill. There were other men of culture and wide interests who protested against it ; but society as a whole was enthralled by it.

The women of the upper classes, though they were by no means so ill-educated as is sometimes supposed, had few interests. They could not forgo the excitement of whisk or casino, ombre or piquet. Faro and hazard were played at the public tables to which reputable women did not go ; but by the end of the century a custom had come in of admitting the owner of a faro table into a lady's drawing-room. He would pay as much as fifty guineas for the privilege. Honest women were driven to pawning and selling their jewels to pay their gambling debts. The dishonest cheated almost openly, knowing that they could not be called to account for their behaviour, as a man would be. Often they repudiated their debts, begged for mercy, or hinted that they would pay in the only way possible. We hear of despair, ruin and suicide.

"Gaming," Selwyn bitterly declared, "was a consumer of four things, time, health, fortune and thinking." He eventually gave it up, having tried in vain to fleece Wilberforce, whom he had thought of as an easy victim.

Lord Lyttelton declared that all sons thought their fathers in their dotage at fifty, and proceeded to divide up the estates by means of post obits. He knew some young men, the sons of a wealthy peer, who were paying interest amounting to £18,000 a year upon money which they had raised in this way.

When George Selwyn was told that a waiter at Arthur's had been arrested, he exclaimed in well-simulated concern : "What a horrid idea he will give of us to the people in Newgate !" The jest contained much truth.

The mania for gambling drove men to lie and cheat, to defraud their creditors, and even to commit murder under the cloak of the duel.

Betting, we may suppose, was as prevalent in the eighteenth century as at the present day. It is true that there was no football and no dogs, and bookmakers, though they did a good trade, could not acquire the fortunes which the telegraph

and telephone have brought them. Men, however, would bet upon the most trivial things. Addison tells us of a young man, who betted two guineas that the Isle of Wight was a peninsula, and three guineas to one that the world was round. These wagers were not any more absurd than some which were actually held. It was betted that six old women from Lambeth could drink a gallon of scalding tea more quickly than six old women from Rotherhithe, that Thurlow got a tellership of the Exchequer for his son, that Lord Ilchester should hit eight out of the first ten pheasants at which he aimed.

There is a delightful story told of two friends, members of White's, who put their money on a pair of woodlice. These insects, it appears, will move with some rapidity towards a light. A candle was accordingly lighted, the stake was £5,000, and the owners of the woodlice waited on the course. One of them getting impatient at the slow movement of his insect, tickled it with a straw to hurry it on. It had, however, the opposite effect, the woodlouse curled up and lay upon the ground, refusing to move. Its opponent, accordingly, came in first, and the backer pocketed the £5,000.

In 1771 Lord March made a bet of five hundred guineas with a Mr. Pigot as to whether Sir William Codrington or old Mr. Pigot should die first. It was proved that old Mr. Pigot had died the day before the bet was made and his son refused to pay on the ground that you could not bet upon a certainty.

Lord March, who had no scruples of any sort, brought an action to recover the amount.

A description of the personnel of a gaming house is given in the *London Mercury* of 1721. There was

“a commissioner or commis who is always a proprietor of the gaming house, he looks in once a night, and the week's account is audited by him and two others of the proprietors. A director who superintends the room, the operator or dealer at faro; croupees, two who watch the card and gather the money for the bank. A puff, one who has money given him to play in order to decoy others, a clerk who is a check upon

the puff. A squib is a puff of lower rank, and hath half the salary of a puff. A flusher, one who sits by to swear how often he has seen the bank stript. A captain, one who is to fight any man that is peevish or out of humour at the loss of his money. An usher who takes care that the porter or grenadier at the door suffers none to come in but those he knows. A porter who at most of the gaming houses, is a soldier hired for the purpose, a runner to get intelligence of all meetings of the justices of the peace, and when the constables go upon the search."

The gaming house also employed waiters and an attorney, though the latter had not probably a fixed salary, and we are told that "any link boy, chairman drawer or other person who gives notice of the constables being upon the search has half a guinea."

Gaming houses, of which there were twenty-two in the parish of Covent Garden alone, made, it was computed, from £40 to £100 a night. From the numbers of persons employed, one would infer that much of the profits went upon wages, but probably these were small, and in some houses the servants recouped themselves by picking pockets, and abstracting winnings.

"I won five hundred pounds last night," writes a gamester "which was immediately appropriated to Mr. Martindale to whom I still owe three hundred pounds, and I am in Brooks's books for thrice that sum."

Brooks, who started life as a wine merchant and a money-lender, was still ready to advance money on good security. He owned one of the best-known gaming clubs in London, and numbers of men were in his debt. Liberal Brooks, Tickell calls him,

Liberal Brooks whose speculative skill  
Is hasty credit and a distant bill  
Who nursed in clubs disdains a vulgar trade  
Exults to trust, and blushes to be paid.

We hear much of the ruin caused by gambling, but some men had extraordinary luck. Thomas Guy, as we all know, built

the hospital which bears his name out of fortunate speculation in South Sea Stock. Mr. Mitford bought a lottery ticket for his infant daughter, and when he discovered what an amount she had won, appropriated the money.

The South Sea Bubble, which is generally regarded as a bogus scheme in which vast fortunes were lost, started as an honest trading company in Spanish America.

After the Peace of Utrecht, Spain conceded a few trading rights in these countries, and a small company, carrying on legitimate business in a small way, might have made a fair profit. There was, however, something exciting, something glittering to the mind of the average Englishman in the thought of Spanish America. Old men told tales which their fathers had told them of how Drake and Hawkins and Grenville had sailed into Plymouth Sound with their ships full of gold and jewels. The stories had lost nothing during the hundred years and more in which they had been going about. Men who were better informed might suggest that Spain had not done too well out of her colonies; but then what could you expect from foreigners and Papists? It was well known that they never did well at anything, as was but proper and natural, and served them right for not being Englishmen and Protestants.

These stories of wealth unlimited sent up the price of the shares, and then came the speculator, the man who had bought when the shares were at a moderate price and hoped to make a great fortune when he sold. Frequently he did so. Men like Mr. Thomas Guy, who sold out during the boom, made a very pretty thing by their speculations.

The news of these successful enterprises spread abroad, and the prices of the shares mounted higher and higher. As much as a thousand pounds was given for a hundred pounds share. The success of company promotion became apparent, and all the stock jobbers of Change Alley and Threadneedle Street rushed into the business. Companies were formed to promote every kind of project. Men put their money into a scheme for getting gold out of sea water, and there was even

a plausible person who floated a company the object of which he blandly stated would be discussed at a later date.

"The King," Lady Ormond told Swift, "adopts the South Sea and calls it his beloved child." The Prince of Wales was governor of a company out of which he made £60,000.

"The hurry of stock jobbing bubbles," says the *London Journal*, "has been so great this week as to exceed all ever known. Nothing but running about from coffee house to coffee house, and subscribing without knowing what the proposals were. The constant cry was 'For God's sake let us subscribe to something: we don't care what it is.'"

Women of the higher classes, who would have protested quite truly a few weeks before that they knew nothing about finance, crowded down to Change Alley to buy shares. Their coaches blocked the streets in the neighbourhood. They had to walk, pushing their way through seething crowds of rich and poor. There were fine gentlemen in cut velvet coats and lace ruffles, and the London slum dweller in his rags and tatters. There was the merchant in broadcloth and the stockbroker's clerk rubbing shoulders with the poor Jew from Monmouth Street and the pickpocket from Seven Dials.

"Luxury, vice and profligacy," says Smollett, "increased to a shocking degree. The adventurers, intoxicated by their imaginary wealths, pampered themselves with the rarest dainties, and the most costly wines. They purchased the most sumptuous furniture, equipage and apparel, though with no taste or discernment. Their criminal passions were indulged to a scandalous excess, and their discourse evinced the most disgusting pride, insolence and ostentation."

The jewellers' shops were full of persons who had made money and were coming to buy, while others, who wanted cash, rushed to sell, and were hardly restrained from raising money on their jointures or selling heir-looms.

And then, suddenly, South Sea shares, which had been £1,000 or more the day before fell to £135. All the bubbles in London burst in sympathy, ruin and bankruptcy were

everywhere. The Duke of Chandos lost £300,000. Gay, who had refused to sell when his £1,000 of South Sea stock reached £20,000, might have qualified as a character in his opera. Gibbon's grandfather, who was a director, had to relinquish £50,000 out of an estate worth £60,000.

The fury of the people against the directors may be imagined. Lord Molesworth declared in the House of Lords that they ought all to be tied in sacks and thrown into the sea. Two Members of Parliament, who were also directors, were lodged in the Tower. They were partners and their firm had to find a quarter of a million to satisfy their ravening creditors.

Lord Sunderland, First Commissioner of the Treasury, resigned his office when charged with receiving £50,000 worth of stock. Nothing seems to have been done to him, but two other Ministers, Craggs and Aislalie, who were convicted of taking bribes, were imprisoned. Craggs took the smallpox and died. It was probable that the majority of the directors were more fools than knaves. They had certainly hastened the downfall of their business by urging the prosecution of other unsound companies. The great bubble of confidence was pricked, and the South Sea scheme went down with the rest.

Many a director and shareholder, who had flaunted about London in a glass coach, and had his box at the Opera, found himself in a debtors' prison.

Behold a poor dejected wretch  
Who kept a South Sea coach of late  
And now is glad to humbly catch  
A penny at the prison gate.

## CRIME, CRIMINALS AND THE POLICE

THE student of the social conditions of the present day may be cheered, among many distressful signs, by one decided improvement. Crime has very greatly diminished during the last fifty years. The reverse of this was the case in the eighteenth century. We hear of an almost maiden assize, only one prisoner in the court in the middle of the century, and thirty years later before the same tribunal, twenty-six prisoners, six of whom were condemned to death. This difference was not confined to one court. On every hand there was an increase of crime and of indictable offences. The reasons for this change are many. The decay of religion has been suggested as one ; and it undoubtedly had its share ; especially among the upper classes, many of whom lived a life of luxury and amusement.

The Grand Jury of Middlesex, in their presentment in 1744, indicated many things which in their opinion conduced to crime, among others " the Lady Mornington and her gaming house in or near Covent Garden."

The poor of London, however, among whom crime flourished, had all through the century lived in slums and rookeries, hardly touched by the hand of organised religion. In some ways their spiritual needs were more fully supplied at the end of the century than at the beginning, for Wesley and Whitefield had organised a magnificent work among the poor and outcast. The decay of religion, involving as it did the decay of morality, was one of the reasons for the increase of crime ; but it was not the only one. The greatest was poverty. There is no doubt that, as the century progressed, the poor became poorer. The enclosures, the industrial revolution, wars and accompanying taxation, the devaluation

of money, all these tended to lower the standard of living. Starvation and violence go hand in hand.

London was crowded with miserable men, commoners who had been driven from their little homes by the spread of enclosures, and who came to the town looking for work, soldiers, brutalised in the wars, who could find no occupation but that of thief or highwayman. There were also the victims of the industrial revolution, men and women who toiled in mill and factory for a miserable pittance, whose only solace was drink, who became dreadfully brutal and degraded.

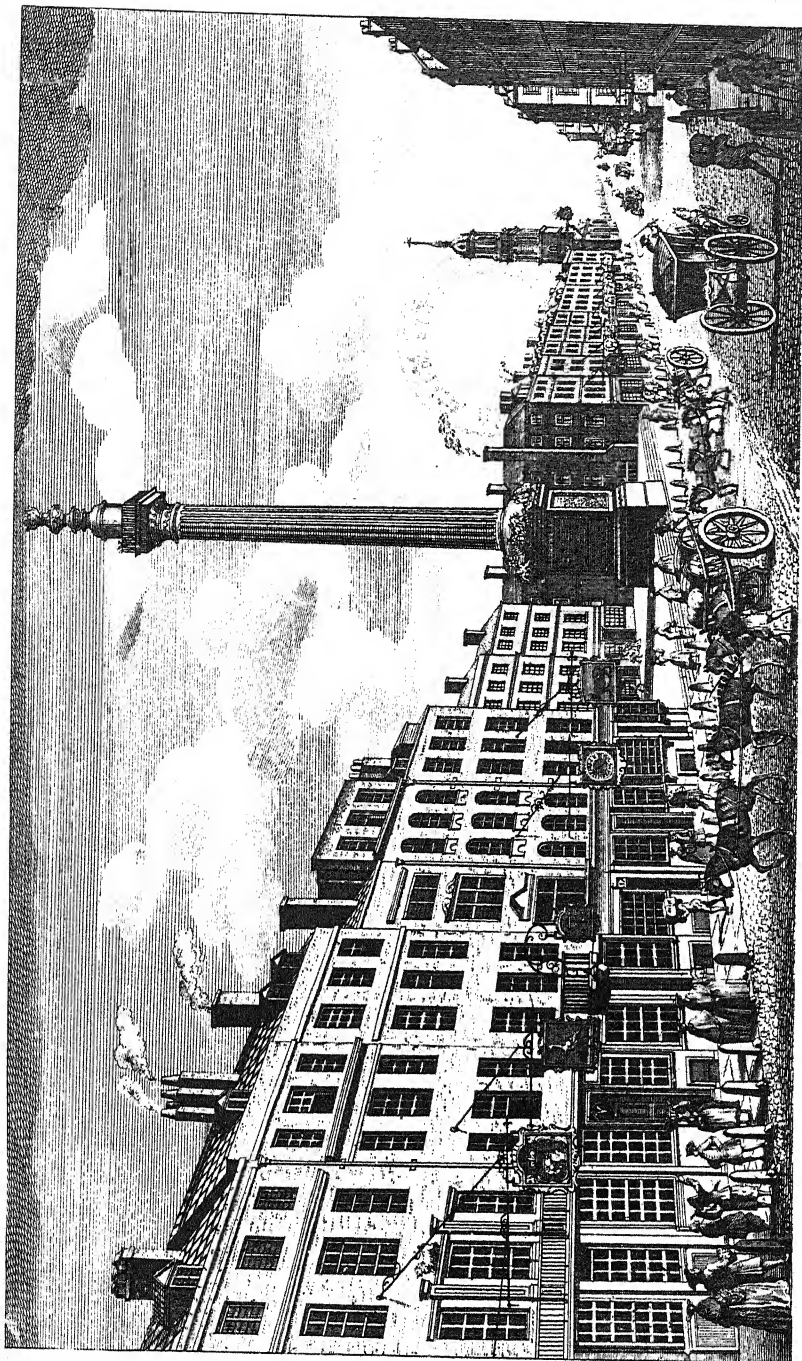
In another chapter we have touched upon the evils of intemperance. The sale of spirits enormously increased. There were two million distilleries in England in 1714, by 1735 there were five million, nor did legislation, as we have said, do anything to check the evil. Crimes of violence which had been comparatively rare in a more sober England increased to a dreadful extent.

"Violence and plunder," says a writer in 1731, "are no longer confined to the highways where the robbers have lurking places to hide, and numberless turnings to avoid and escape the pursuit of the country . . . the streets of the city are now places of danger; men are knocked down and robbed, nay, sometimes murdered at their own doors, and in passing and repassing from house to house or from shop to shop."

Men looked back with envy upon the age of William III and Anne when religion and morality flourished, when the churches were full, and the gaols comparatively empty. The citizens then formed themselves into associations to assist the constables in keeping law and order.

Marlborough's wars, which were on so large a scale that constant enlistment was necessary, absorbed many a rogue and ruffian, and the women of the streets followed the army. When peace returned the criminal and the harlot came back. The associations of those who had helped to keep the peace melted away. Dr. Johnson always walked the streets with a stout cudgel, and many citizens went about armed; but in





*The Monument*



the dark streets, with narrow lanes and pent houses where thieves could lurk unseen, self-defence was most difficult. A blow from behind, a thrust with a knife, and a man might be left dead or dying in the gutter.

Few prudent men ventured out alone after dark. The tradesman called out his 'prentices with their cudgels, friends made up parties for mutual protection when they returned from the coffee house or the tavern.

Many families refused to go to the theatre on account of the dangers of the homeward journey. Women of the respectable classes never ventured out alone after dark, the danger from ruffians and footpads was too great, and if these were escaped, a zealous or venal constable might haul the unfortunate woman off to the lock-up on a charge of solicitation. Fielding, in the second chapter of *Amelia*, describes how a poor girl was brought before Justice Thrasher.

"She was found walking the streets after twelve o'clock and the watchman believed her to be a common strumpet. She pleaded in her defence (as was really the truth) that she was a servant, and was sent by her mistress, who was a small shopkeeper, and upon the point of delivery, to fetch a mid-wife."

The magistrate, hearing that she had no money, ordered her to Bridewell for a month. The description of the travesty of justice meted out by Justice Thrasher reads like a transcript from an actual report and this is what it undoubtedly was. Fielding's predecessor at Bow Street had made a thousand pounds a year out of his office, and the great novelist was one of the few London magistrates who meted out even-handed justice.

The Middlesex magistrate of the better sort only attended occasionally at Sessions, and left the bulk of the onerous and disagreeable work to the "trading justice."

If the magistrates were above a bribe the watch certainly was not. These men were frequently old and feeble, and had obtained their posts by bribery and favour. They cowered in their little sentry boxes, which the ribald youth of the city

would often tip up, thus imprisoning the "Charlie" beneath it. They were generally out of the way when their services were required and turned up after the crime had been committed, and the perpetrators had got clear away.

One of their duties was to perambulate the streets at night with lantern and staff proclaiming the hour.

Past one o'clock and almost two  
My masters all good day to you.

When Sir William Pepys's house in Portman Square was robbed, the burglar being arrested, Sir William had an interview with him. He enquired how it was that he had not heard the ladder being put against the window as he was lying awake ill. The burglar replied that he had seen to this, and had arranged with the watchman to call the hour at that precise moment when he raised his ladder.

The parish constable might be a more able-bodied man; but he was an unpaid official, chosen at haphazard by the Parish Vestry. He had onerous and unpleasant work and thought himself entitled to make what he could out of it. Frequently the only men whom he arrested were those too poor to bribe him, and the hapless street walker who beat hemp at Bridewell was the most indigent and miserable member of her terrible profession.

On a hot summer's night in the year 1742 the constables, being more than ordinarily drunk, proceeded to put the law into operation against street walkers. They arrested every woman they met till they had collected nearly thirty, whom they thrust into the St. Martin's Round-house. The doors and windows were shut and they were kept in this pestilential place till the morning, their cries for water being unheeded. When the doors were opened two were dead, and two others dying. Of those who died one, a respectable washerwoman returning late from work, was pregnant. The keeper of the Round-house was indicted for wilful murder, but a jury acquitted him.

A few years later the people were moved to horror and fury

at the story of the Black Hole of Calcutta ; but our own crimes and scandals seem to affect us less than the crimes and scandals of other people. According to the slave owner who visited the Lancashire cotton mills, no West Indian would have been so cruel as to make children of tender age labour for fourteen hours a day in a factory. The sight filled him with horror, just as the model of the slave ship had shocked members of the British House of Commons.

When constables were chosen by the Parish Vestry a publican was often selected, though the practice was frowned upon by the authorities. It was frequently his pleasing custom to take his prisoner home to drink with him, and then, if the man had been a good customer, to let him go free.

There were districts in London where no constable or sheriff's officer dared penetrate. The old Alsatia, that kingdom of rogues and broken men, finally disappeared early in the eighteenth century, but there were still many streets and alleys which were entirely peopled by criminals.

There was a disreputable district hard by East Smithfield consisting of Chick Lane, Field Lane, Cow Cross and Turnbull Street, which was known as Jack Ketch's Warren. It had been a place of evil repute since the days of Shakespeare who makes Justice Shallow prate to Falstaff "of the wildness of his youth, and the feats he hath done about Turnbull Street."

After the Gordon Riots a detachment of troops marched through the district, searching for some of the insurgents.

"The houses," we are told, "are divided from top to bottom, and into many apartments, some having two, others three, others four doors, opening into different alleys. To such a height is our neglect of police arrived, the owners of these houses make no secret of their being let for the entertainment of thieves."

Saffron Hill was full of houses of ill fame and thieves quarters. A hostelry there, the Red Lion, had a particularly evil reputation for harbouring robbers, highwaymen and murderers. There were horrible rookeries in and around St. Giles, Great Queen Street, and the Haymarket, many of which

lasted well into the nineteenth century. The sanctuary at Westminster was the sanctuary of cutpurses and footpads, and Thieving Lane was worthy of its name.

"Lady Betty Waldegrave," says Walpole, "was robbed t'other night in Hyde Park under the very noses of the lamps and 'patrols.'" She was not the only victim of the footpad and the highwayman. The roads and open spaces in the neighbourhood of London were the happy hunting ground of the High Toby. Hounslow Heath, Blackheath, Finchley Common and the road to Hampstead were infested by these gentry.

Men walked or rode in gangs for mutual protection, and went armed if they travelled by coach. Even in the street a coach was liable to attack. In Hogarth's picture "Night" we see the "Salisbury Flyer" upsetting over a bonfire in the street, while a robber shoots into it from the other side.

A plot had even been hatched to hold up and rob the Queen on her way from the City to St. James's. Fortunately for Her Majesty, the sight of Alderman Heathcote coming back resplendent in his coach from the House of Commons was too much for the highwaymen, and they stopped the worthy citizen instead. Meanwhile the Queen's coach passed by unperceived.

The *Gentleman's Magazine* tells us of a highwaywoman, who stopped an astounded butcher and demanded his money.

"A genteel looking man," her companion, enforced her demand with a pistol, declaring the butcher to be a brute to deny the lady's request.

"The butcher," we are told, "could not resist an invitation to be gallant, when supported by such arguments, and he placed six guineas and his watch in her hands."

Some highwaymen boasted that the terror of their name was enough, and that they never had occasion to use their arms. Others were not so awe-inspiring or so scrupulous.

In addition to the highwaymen, gangs of ruffians terrorised London. We have spoken of the Mohawks in the reign of Anne. It is probable that their activities were exaggerated,

but there is no doubt that young men of good family, inflamed by drink, rushed about the London streets committing many excesses. The young barristers from Lincoln's Inn and the Temple showed a disregard for the Law which was most unbecoming in men of their profession.

The half-pay officer, still an ensign it might be at forty years of age, was often driven into evil courses, and took to the road, the bankrupt shopkeeper would ride out on to the turnpike and cut a purse. Besides these men there was a vast army who lived by crime, and had done so since their tenderest age.

"If a horse tumbles or a woman faints," says Bee, in his *Picture of London*, "away they run to increase the crowd and the confusion. They create a bustle and try over the pockets of unsuspecting persons; till at length having marked out one, the accomplice shoves him hard up against other persons (usually some of the gang) who naturally repress the intrusion. Thus wedged in they hit him over the head with a stick, when he, to save his hat, or to resent the insult, lifts up his arms. A third or a fourth still further behind gives one more shove, rams his flat hand hard against the belly of the person marked out to be done, and pulls out his watch.

"If it be his pocket book they are after, they lift up the skirts of his coat to come at his inside pocket; but should it lie on the breast the rogue who is next to the victim seizes his collar behind and drags until the button gives way, or there is space enough between the coat and the body to thrust in his arm."

There were thieves' kitchens in the eighteenth century where children were taught to pick pockets after the approved manner. Many an abandoned boy or girl was adopted by criminals and brought up to thievery or prostitution. Addison gives heart-rending accounts of some of these poor victims of what we now call the White Slave Traffic. There was no law to protect them. The keepers of disorderly houses sent their agents to meet the Waggoners as is seen in the *Harlot's Progress*.

"Who can say," writes Fielding, "that one of these poor

children had been prostituted through viciousness? No, they are young, unprotected and of the female sex, therefore become the prey of the bawd and the debauchee."

Though solicitation was forbidden by law the streets and public places were infested with these unhappy women, and only those who had no money to bribe the watch were ever taken into custody.

The Government and responsible citizens watched the increase in crime with great uneasiness. Various proposals were made for the better policing of the city, and schemes were propounded for checking the rising tide of lawlessness.

Informers and thief takers were encouraged, as much as £40 being offered for the apprehension of a highwayman. The most notorious of these informers was Jonathan Wild. This man's ill fame has survived, thanks to Fielding's matchless irony. For years he was the confidant of housebreakers and highwaymen. They knew him as a reliable fence always ready to purchase their booty, at a slightly higher figure than his confrères, free with advice as to cracking cribs, and stopping coaches.

The Government knew him too as a man who would bring a robber to justice when he had done with him. There were numbers of such men; but they did not work upon the wholesale scale of Jonathan Wild. The matter became at last so notorious that the Government took action and Jonathan was indicted for receiving money for the recovery of stolen goods which he never attempted to procure. It was one of the least of his crimes, which included receiving, incitement to robbery and violence and giving false evidence against wholly innocent persons, whereby he gained the reward of an informer.

He was duly condemned and hanged at Tyburn, the mob pelting him with stones and dirt, and heaping curses upon his head. He was not even allowed to rest in his grave. The coffin which had been put into the ground in St. Pancras Churchyard was found next day to be empty. It was supposed that the body snatchers had got him.



## THE POLICE

The authorities began to see the folly of relying upon informers and a wholly inefficient police. Various schemes were propounded for the protection of London citizens.

Fielding's work which he called "*An Enquiry into the Causes of the late increase of robbers etc. with some proposals for remedying the growing evil*," was published in 1751. Fielding, with a curious lack of that sympathy which is apparent in many of his writings, attributes the increase in crime to a love of luxury among the common people. Surely the misery of the poorest classes must have been apparent to a Bow Street magistrate ; but men are only too inclined to shut themselves up in their own little castles, and seldom glance over the wall which their prejudices have erected.

Fielding admitted that the policing of London was very bad, and that bribery and corruption were rampant. Thanks to his exertions and to those of his brother Sir John Fielding, a better police force was inaugurated.

The men were known as Bow Street Runners. On the whole they were honest and dependable ; but they were few in number compared with the regular watchmen and thief takers, rather a detective force than a constabulary.

The authorities believed that heavy and cruel punishments were the chief deterrents to crime. At the end of the century there were two hundred crimes in the statute book which were punishable by death. This terrible severity defeated its own object. The highwayman or the cutpurse if resisted would often kill his opponents. He would be hanged for stealing his purse, and he could not be more than hanged for murder.

By bribery and influence scores of people cheated the gallows, and when a man was brought before the court, juries often declined to convict, although the evidence was overwhelming. Even judges, relentless though some of them were, had their moments of mercy. A young barrister, watching a case in an assize court at the close of the century, gives us a pleasant picture of contemporary justice.

A poor man had been indicted for stealing a silver cup and was already in the dock as the barrister came into

## CRIME, CRIMINALS AND THE POLICE

court. He was a miserable-looking ill-clothed creature, the father of a family of young children. His wife was sick and for her sake he had stolen the cup out of a goldsmith's shop. He could not be represented by counsel,<sup>1</sup> and if he had had one to defend him, there was little the man could have said. He had undoubtedly stolen the cup.

That he was a starving man with a sick wife was no defence in the eyes of the law. The judge looked round the court. It had been newly painted an ugly red-brown colour, and the paint was not quite dry. The silver cup, lying there upon the table, the cup which had been found in the poor man's house had a smear of red-brown where it had touched the wet paint as they carried it into court. The judge looked at it. The man had been indicted for stealing a *silver* cup.

"Gentlemen of the Jury," said the judge suddenly, "be pleased to look at that cup." The jury craned their necks over the side of the box and regarded it.

"That cup," said the judge, "has been described as silver. I notice a red-brown mark on the side of it. Perhaps you will draw your own conclusions from this."

The jurymen whispered together. The foreman, who was experienced in such things, murmured something about "Sheffield."

"Ah, Sheffield," said the judge smoothly and held the indictment to be bad. A man could not be tried on a bad indictment. The prisoner left the court, and the judge invited the young barrister back to his lodging to dine.

"Of course," he said, "I knew the stain was paint. I saw them knock the cup against the door as they brought it in; but what else could I do? You would not have me hang the man?"

In this case the prisoner had been lucky. Had the judge carried out the letter of the law he would have been hanged outside Newgate Prison, or earlier in the century at Tyburn.

<sup>1</sup> Prisoners charged with felony could not be represented by counsel, though misdemeanants might have that advantage.

## CRUELTY TO CHILDREN AND ANIMALS

Besides crimes of violence and robbery there are those other secret offences, of cruelty and oppression to the young and weak. Occasionally the perpetrators of these crimes were brought to justice.

A mob howled round the scaffold when Mrs. Brownrigg was hanged for the torture and murder of her hapless apprentices. The case, though well known, was not the only example of horrible cruelty to unfortunate apprentices. A woman named Metyard and her daughter were hanged for the murder of a child in their employment; but if the daughter had not accused her mother of the crime, it might never have been discovered. The body of the poor child was certainly found horribly mutilated beside the Fleet Ditch; but the Coroner dismissed the matter by saying that the body had probably been used by a surgeon for dissection and that it had better be buried. There must, we fear, have been many such cases.

The cruelty to animals does not bear thinking about. There was no law to protect them, and public opinion, brutalised by such spectacles as the baiting of bears and bulls, and the throwing at cocks, had no pity or regard for them. Here and there a man might protest. Hogarth produced his plates "The Four Stages of Cruelty" as cheaply as possible, hoping that they would have a large sale and make some impression upon those who bought them.

The Quakers, ever in the van of mercy and humanity, protested against the baiting of helpless beasts, and Lord Montagu was so far in advance of his time that he established a home for them.

In the *Public Advertiser* of 1758 we read that :

"This day being Shrove Tuesday the peace officers have been directed and are requested to use their utmost endeavours to prevent the no less barbarous than shameful custom of throwing at cocks, and as the press warrants for recruiting for the army are by this time delivered to most of the officers, it is to be hoped that some of these heroes will have their strength

## CRIME, CRIMINALS AND THE POLICE

and courage employed more to their own honour, and more to the advantage of their country.”

Gradually a more humane spirit arose, though it was not until the following century that laws were passed for the protection of animals.

## PAINS, PENALTIES AND PRISONS

THERE were fourteen prisons in the City of London. Excepting the Poultry, they were all destroyed during the Gordon Riots, but, as may be supposed, were re-erected as soon as possible after the tumult.

It was computed that there were confined in the London prisons in 1774 about 1,700 persons of whom 1,274 were debtors. This was in a population of about three-quarters of a million, when the death penalty was terribly frequent, and the stocks, the pillory, transportations and whipping were part of the penal code. According to Goldsmith there were "in England more convicts in a year than half the dominions of Europe united."

The most notorious of the gaols was Newgate. It was one of the oldest prisons in England. Dick Whittington left money for the pious purpose of repairing it, and his cat was carved in bas relief upon the gate.

"The exterior," we are told, "presents a uniform front, and consists of two wings, the Keeper's house forming the centre. The north side was the debtors' prison. This was three stories in height, and had courts for men and women, measuring about 49 feet by 31 feet."

"It is a large prison," says Maitland, writing in 1754, "and made very strong the better to secure such sort of criminals which too much fill it. It is a dismal place within. The prisoners are sometimes packed so close together and the air so corrupted by their stench and nastiness that it occasions a disease called the Jail Distemper of which they die by dozens, and cartloads of them are carried out, and thrown into a pit in the churchyard of Christchurch without ceremony, and so infectious is this distemper that several judges, jurymen and lawyers, etc., have taken it off the prisoners when they have

## PAINS, PENALTIES AND PRISONS

been brought to the Old Bailey to be tried, and died soon after, of which we have an instance within these seven years. And to this wretched place innocent people are sometimes sent, and loaded with irons before their trial, not to secure them, but to extort money from them by a merciless jailor; for if they have money to bribe him they may have the irons as light as they please. The City have been so good lately as to introduce a ventilator on the top of Newgate to expel the foul air, and to introduce fresh, to preserve the prisoners' health, and the prisoners are, many of them, kept in distant and more airy prisons till within a few days of their trials. Sweet herbs also are strewed in the court and passages of it, to prevent infection; and the snuffing up of vinegar, it is said, is the most likely way to preserve the healths of those that are obliged to attend such trials."

The City, in short, was frightened by the Black Assize at the Old Bailey when between fifty and sixty persons caught gaol fever in court, including the Lord Mayor, an alderman, an Undersheriff, and several of the jury.

These slight alterations did little or nothing to improve the condition of the gaol. To decent, respectable men and women it justified its title "hell above ground."

In many prisons the water supply was most inadequate, even by eighteenth-century standards, the gaoler doling out three pints or a quart a day to each person for all purposes. The poorer prisoners lay upon filthy straw spread on a stone or earthen floor. If they wished for bedding, they must bring their own, or hire it expensively from the turnkey.

If they wanted other food than the three-halfpenny loaf which weighed seven ounces they must pay for it themselves. They did not indeed always receive the amount of bread to which they were entitled.

At the Cold Bath Fields Prison when a belated enquiry was held it was found that the loaves were deficient in weight by an ounce or an ounce and a half, and that the prison weight was light. In most gaols the head turnkey held a licence to sell beer, and wine and spirits were brought into the prisons and sold indiscriminately.

## MISERY AND IRONS

There was no classification of prisoners. The hardened criminal and the man awaiting trial were herded together in the closest proximity.

In 1730 the prison chaplain, James Guthrie, mentions without comment as though it were an everyday thing, that he had visited a prisoner in Newgate who was unable to rise because his legs and feet were so much swollen from the irons which had been placed upon them, and from the great cold. The unhappy man died a few days later, and Guthrie does not appear to think this anything unusual either.

In 1729 a certain Captain McPheadris, having refused to pay the fees

“had irons put upon his legs, which were too little, so that in putting them on, his legs were like to have been broken. He was dragged away to the dungeon, where he lay without a bed, loaded with irons so close rivetted that they kept him in continual torture and mortified his legs.”

The unhappy man, lame and nearly blind from ill usage and imprisonment, petitioned the judges, who agreed that the gaoler who had done these things deserved some reprimand, but “it being out of term they could give the prisoner no relief or satisfaction.”

Innocent persons lingered for long years in prison. They might have been declared not guilty by a jury; a grand jury might not even have returned a true bill against them, but they had no money to pay the fees charged by the wretches who battered upon them.

When Howard visited Newgate in 1782 he found that some of the many fees had been abolished. There remained however, the following, which all prisoners had to pay before leaving :

Debtors to pay . . . . .	8s.	10d.
Felons to pay . . . . .	18s.	10d.
Misdemeanour or Fines . . . . .	14s.	10d.
Transports . . . . .	14s.	10d.

Howard, in his capacity of High Sheriff of Bedfordshire,

## PAINS, PENALTIES AND PRISONS

urged his local bench to pay the gaolers a salary instead of permitting such extortion.

"The magistrates," he tells us, "were properly affected with the grievance, and willing to grant the relief desired; but they wanted a precedent for charging the county with the expense. I therefore rode into several neighbouring counties in search of a precedent; but I soon learned that the same injustice was practised in them; and looking into the prisons I beheld scenes of calamity, which I grew daily more and more anxious to alleviate. In order to gain a more perfect knowledge of the particulars and extent of it, by various and accurate observation, I visited most of the county gaols in England."

Howard's records of what he saw in these abodes of misery give us a horrible picture of prison conditions. A special providence seems to have guarded Howard. He died at the age of sixty-nine, probably of camp fever, contracted while visiting a patient; but through the many years when he was almost incessantly travelling in England and upon the Continent, visiting prisons, Bridewells, lazarettos, lunatic asylums, he entirely escaped gaol fever, smallpox and the other diseases which were endemic in the prisons. His clothes and even his notebook became tainted and pestilential, and had to be constantly changed. The very post-chaise which waited for him outside prison doors was rendered so offensive that Howard discarded it, and took to riding everywhere upon horseback. He gave up his life to the service of the poor and outcast, and Wesley, that other great lover and servant of mankind, said of him that he "was one of the greatest men in Europe."

We hear much of the prisons and sponging houses in the eighteenth-century novels, and for a realistic description of one of the former, readers may be referred to the pages of *Amelia*. It has been said that novels present a highly coloured and caricatured picture of ordinary life; but when Fielding is giving an account of matters which were in the day's work of a Bow Street magistrate, his descriptions are obviously reliable.



"Mr. Booth was no sooner arrived in prison than a number of persons gathered round him all demanding 'garnish'; to which Mr. Booth not making a ready answer, as indeed he did not understand the word, some were going to lay hands upon him, when a person of apparent dignity came up, and insisted that no one should affront the gentleman. This person then, who was no other than the Master or Keeper of the prison, turning towards Mr. Booth, acquainted him that it was the custom of the place, for every prisoner upon his first arrival there, to give something to the former prisoners to make them drink. This he said was called 'garnish,' and concluded with advising his new customer to draw his purse upon the present occasion. Mr. Booth answered that he would very readily comply with this laudable custom, was it in his power; but that in reality he had not a shilling in his pocket,—and what was more, he had not a shilling in the world.

"'Oho if that be the case,' cries the Keeper, 'it is another matter, and I have nothing to say.' Upon which he immediately departed, and left poor Booth to the mercy of his companions, who without loss of time, applied themselves to 'uncosing' as they termed it, and with such dexterity, that his coat was not only stripped off, but out of sight in a minute. . . .

"Blear-eyed Moll then came up to Mr. Booth with a smile or rather a grin on her countenance and asked him for a dram of gin, and when Booth assured her that he had not a penny of money she replied: 'D——n your eyes, I thought by your look you had been a clever fellow and upon the snaffling lay at least<sup>1</sup>; but d——n your body and eyes, I find you are some sneaking budge rascal.'"<sup>2</sup>

Booth found the prison company a mixed one. There was "a very pretty girl, whose beauty Mr. Booth could not help admiring the moment he saw her, declaring, at the same time, he thought she had great innocence in her countenance." The girl turned out to be "a common street walker" and discharged a "volley of words, every one of which was too indecent to be repeated."

The "little creature crying by herself in a corner" was com-

<sup>1</sup> snaffling lay = highway robbery.

<sup>2</sup> budge rascal = pilferer.

## PAINS, PENALTIES AND PRISONS

mitted because her father-in-law, who was in the Grenadier Guards, had sworn that he was "afraid of his life or of some bodily harm which she would do him." A father and daughter are in the prison for stealing a loaf when starving. An old soldier with a wooden leg and the scars of battle upon him was sent to the gaol "on suspicion of stealing three herrings from a fishmonger." He had been acquitted, but he was brought back again for his fees.

On the other hand a man arrested on an indictment found against him for a most horrid perjury is "to be bailed to-day."

The prisoners amuse each other as they think fit. Blear-eyed Moll and her companions are hardly restrained from putting an end to a wretch against whom they had a grievance; but the rest of them quarrel and fight and drink, dice and cheat as they please.

They are disappointed of seeing "a fellow whipt for petty larceny," for "after being stript having advanced another sixpence" he "was discharged untouched."

The "garnish" charged to those entering a prison was usually 2*s.* 6*d.* to a felon and 5*s.* 6*d.* to a debtor. The largest of the debtors' prisons was the Fleet. When it was rebuilt after the Gordon Riots it could contain about 250 prisoners, and a population besides of wives and children who often followed the breadwinner into gaol.

A picture of it shows a gloomy building, rather like the worst tenement dwellings of Victorian times. It has a fairly large courtyard where the prisoners are playing at tennis and fives. The prison was divided into five parts, the cellar floor, containing kitchen, cellar and fourteen basement rooms, the chapel gallery with the tap-room and fourteen rooms, the coffee-room, gallery and twenty-four rooms, the infirmary gallery and twenty-seven rooms. All these rooms were about fourteen feet by twelve. The gaoler was termed the Warden of the Fleet, and "his fees" we are told "for turning the key, for chamber rent, etc., amount to a considerable sum." It was the custom in this prison, as in many others, for the

warden who had been appointed by patent, to farm out the gaol to the highest bidder, who made what he could out of the unhappy inmates.

In 1729 rumours of the most inhuman barbarities perpetrated by the wardens Bainbridge and Huggins reached the ear of General Oglethorpe, the philanthropist and precursor of Howard. He raised a question in the House, and was chosen as chairman of a committee to investigate the state of the prisons.

They found when they entered the gaol Sir William Rich, a prisoner who had offended the warden, loaded with irons, and that unhappy debtors had perished of hunger in the dungeons to which he had consigned them. Hogarth's picture of Bainbridge's examination before the committee of the House is very well known. We see the half-naked prisoner exhibiting the irons about his neck, and the instruments of torture which lie upon the table.

The committee was horrified at the disclosures and the House presented an address to the King, demanding that Huggins, Bainbridge and their accomplices should be prosecuted for murder. They were deprived of their offices and lodged in Newgate; but there the matter ended, as far as they were concerned.

A set of rules and orders for the better government of the gaol was, however, drawn up. By these regulations, the prisoners could be turned out of private rooms and lodged in the common ward if they were unable to pay their chamber rent, but no one could be confined under the pretence of non-payment of chamber rent; but "all of them to have liberty of walking in the fore yard, hall and cellar of the house by day-time without interruption."

It was also resolved "that the Warden shall not for the future detain or imbezil any prisoner's goods" though he might still "hold their persons until his dues were paid."

The inmates of the gaol were also to keep one of the keys of the almsbox set outside the building for the offerings of the charitable public, while the warden retained the other, and a

table of gifts and bequests to poor debtors was "to be fairly writ in a legible hand, and hung up in the hall of the said prison."

The warden was "enjoined to keep the prison house and windows in good and necessary repair, and keep the drains, bog holes and dunghill as clean and free from stench and noisomeness as possible." He was also to take care that divine service be performed, and the sacrament of the Lord's Supper administered, "and to treat the several prisoners in his custody with all tenderness and humanity."

It may be hoped that these regulations, which certainly sound excellent, had some effect, if only temporarily, on the condition of the prison. Howard gave no favourable account of it when he visited it many years later.

The debtor was by law entitled to his "groats," that is to say *4d.* a day from his creditor; but if the creditor refused to pay, the prisoner's remedy was to sue him for the money. This was impossible in the case of a penniless man confined in a gaol.

"For debt only," says Defoe, "are men condemned to languish in perpetual imprisonment, and to starve without mercy, redeemed only by the grave. Kings show mercy to traitors, to murderers and thieves . . . but in debt we are lost to this world. We cannot obtain the favour of being hanged or transported, but our lives must linger within the walls, till released by the grave; our youth wastes away inactive, grey hairs cover us, and we languish in all the agonies of misery and want, while our wives and children perish from mere hunger. . . . Tell me what nation condemns poor incapable debtors to perpetual imprisonment for no offence but not being able to pay what they owe?"

A writer in *The Idler* in 1759 estimated that there were 20,000 prisoners for debt in Great Britain and Ireland. Many of these unhappy men starved to death, some eked out a miserable existence on their inadequate dole, others stood begging at the gates of the prison or hung collecting-boxes out of the window.

## POOR DEBTORS

The Rules or Liberties were the districts round about the prison in which debtors might live if they had the money to do so. They could not leave the district except upon a Sunday, when no one might be arrested for debt, but they could lodge there unmolested by their creditors for as long as they pleased.

The plight of the poor debtor was not a matter of complete indifference to the nation at large. Many a poet and writer was confined in gaol, and proclaimed his miseries with no uncertain voice.

The Lord Mayor and the City Companies sent gifts to the Marshalsea and the Compter prisoners. Charitable funds were raised for the relief of poor debtors, and it was considered a pious act to bequeath money for their assistance.

Courts of Request, first founded in 1518 and extended in the eighteenth century, enabled those owing small sums to compound for their debts by a three months' imprisonment in Newgate.

An act for the Relief of Insolvent Debtors was passed in 1776, and eight thousand persons were able to get their discharge in consequence. Their freedom was not always a matter for rejoicing. Many of them had been in gaol a long time, trades and occupations after so many years of neglect, were unlearnt and forgotten. They were half starved and in rags and had the melancholy prospect of exchanging a life of hunger and misery for one which might be even worse.

The Bridewell, which we know from Hogarth's plate, was originally a prison for women. In it

"all strumpets, night walkers, pickpockets, vagrant and idle persons that are taken up for their ill tricks, as also incorrigible and disobedient servants, are committed by the Mayor and Aldermen and being so committed are forced to beat hemp in public view with due correction of whipping, according to their offence for such a time as the president and court shall see cause."

Later in the century it became also a prison for men. In

Hogarth's plate we see one or two men beating hemp in company with the women. The gaoler stands over the prisoners stuck in hand like the overseer on a slave plantation. One unfortunate hangs from a sort of pillory by her wrists. "Better to work than to stand thus" is the inscription above this instrument of correction, and "the reward of idleness" is written on the whipping-post.

The women all appear to be well dressed; but fine clothes are the stock in trade of their dreadful profession. According to the *Grub Street Journal* of 1730, "one Mary Moffat of great note in the hundreds of Drury . . . is now beating hemp in a gown very richly laced with silver."

Pennant describes the inmates thus :

"When the door was opened by the Keeper they ran towards it like so many hounds to kennel and presented a most moving sight; about twenty young creatures, the eldest not exceeding sixteen, many of them with angelic faces, divested of every angelic expression, and featured with impudence, impenetency and profligacy and clothed in the silken tatters of squalid finery."

Apart from the brutal punishments the women seem to have been fairly well treated. They worked from eight till four in the winter and from six till six in the summer, with intervals for meals. On four days in the week they were each given a penny loaf ( $8\frac{1}{2}$  oz. in 1783), ten ounces of cooked beef without bone, broth and three pints of beer. On the other days they had a penny loaf each, four ounces of cheese, a pint of milk, porridge, and three pints of beer. They slept upon rye straw, and were allowed, we are told, "some firing."

The War of Independence in America stopped the transportation of convicts to the plantations. Botany Bay did not become a penal settlement till 1787. Prisons were full to overflowing, and the wave of crime flowed steadily on. It was suggested that convict ships should be fitted out in the Thames, and that the prisoners should be set to work dredging the river. Men who expected a time of slothful idleness in Newgate, of slothful ease with good food and drink if they

## THE PILLORY. WHIPPING

had the money to pay for it, were horrified to find themselves dressed in coarse uniform, fed miserably and forced to work under the lash in the water and mud of the Thames.

Many prisoners attempted to escape from the hulks and some succeeded. In an age when there was no police supervision and gaolers were very venal, escape was not difficult. Many were recaptured, however, for the reward of an informer was alluring, and wherever honour might be found in the eighteenth century, it did not dwell among thieves.

Where elevated o'er the gaping crowd  
Clasp'd in the board the perjured head is bowed  
Betimes retreat, here thick as hailstones pour  
Turnips and half-hatched eggs, a mingled shower.

This is Gay's reference to the punishment of the pillory, and a very terrible ordeal it might be.

In 1770 a thief taker who had been convicted of giving false evidence against innocent persons, whereby they were condemned, was killed in the pillory by an infuriated mob, although an army of sheriffs and constables endeavoured to protect him. His three companions and partners in iniquity were taken down half dead and quite senseless from the usage they had received.

Defoe, on the other hand, was pelted with flowers by a throng of his admirers.

The punishment of being set in the stocks, like that of the pillory, depended much on the character of the prisoner and the whim of the mob. A popular man would be sustained with wine and table delicacies; an unpopular one might be pelted with rotten eggs, dead cats, sticks and stones.

Whipping either in public or private was a very ordinary punishment. The whipping of the women at Bridewell was at one time a sight to which anyone might come.

"If you are not a woman of virtue you will be whipped," says Fielding in the *Coffee House Politician*. The street walker was not, however, the only female upon whom such punishment was inflicted.

"On Wednesday," says the *Public Ledger* of 1764, "a

woman, an old offender, was conveyed in a cart from Clerkenwell Bridewell to Enfield and publicly whipped at the cart's tail by the common hangman, for cutting down, and destroying wood in Enfield Chase. She is to undergo the same discipline twice more."

Branding was inflicted upon those who could plead benefit of clergy and was not so much a punishment as a mark by which such offenders should be known, and prevented from claiming such benefit again. In the case of peers and prisoners of high rank a cold iron was always used, and almost anyone who had money could bribe the executioner to apply an unheated iron.

This benefit of clergy originated in the twelfth century when the Church claimed that every clerk in orders should be exempt from the law of the land. A compromise whereby a lesser punishment was inflicted was finally reached, though the perpetrators of the more serious crimes could not claim benefit. Offences were divided into two categories, clergyable and unclergyable. The test of being a clerk was being able to read "the neck verse" as it was called or the opening words of the fifty-first Psalm.

When there were so many crimes on the statute book which were punishable by death, executions took place with terrible regularity. Many a man languished for weeks in gaol hoping that by bribery or influence a reprieve might come to him. When almost all hope had departed, on the day before the execution, he and other condemned prisoners were taken for their last service into the chapel of the gaol. There they would sit in the condemned pew with a coffin draped in black put in the midst of them, while the chaplain from the pulpit implored them to repent, and fellow-prisoners from the galleries shouted to them to hold up their heads and kick off their shoes, when the cart moved away from the gallows. A dashing highwayman or a popular murderer would hold a large reception in the prison. Men and women of fashion often crowded to see them, artists came to paint their portraits, delicate viands and choice wines were brought to them.



## PROCESSIONS TO TYBURN

When the dread procession formed outside the prison on Monday morning a question of precedence often arose. The customary offerings, a white cap with black ribbons, a prayer-book, a nosegay to stick in the coat or an orange to hold on the way to Tyburn, were brought to the prisoners.

The deputy sheriff went first in his carriage, but who was to go next?

"An highwayman," we read, "formerly was entitled to the pre-eminent seat; but robbers of the Mail now enjoy that distinction. The difficulty of regulating these points is when both sorts of culprits are travelling to Tyburn. I remember having seen two gentlemen taking their last journey on this road in a two wheeled vehicle hung with solemn sable, who quarrelled as they went on the question of precedence."

From six till ten on execution morning the great bell of St. Sepulchre's Church tolled, "to the end," it was proclaimed, "that all godly people hearing that bell and knowing that it is for you going to your deaths, may be stirred up to hearty prayer to God to bestow His grace and mercy upon you while you yet live."

In Hogarth's plate of the "Idle Apprentice" we see the seething crowd of brutal men and women. We see children picking pockets, and street hawkers crying their wares. The hangman has climbed aloft on the gallows and is smoking a pipe there, the prison chaplain looks out of his coach window. The man in the cart with the prisoner is Silas Todd, the Methodist preacher. He had brought the dreadful Elizabeth Brownrigg to repentance, and had been the friend and saviour of many a poor prisoner.

"I buried what was mortal of Silas Todd," says Wesley in his journal. "For many years he attended the malefactors in Newgate without fee or reward; and I suppose no man these hundred years has been so successful in that melancholy office."

In 1784 the horrible procession through the London streets

was abolished and malefactors were hanged outside Newgate prison. There was, of course, a vast crowd, and the "Magpie and Stump" did a fine trade in letting windows to view the execution; but fewer people were shocked and demoralised by the spectacle.

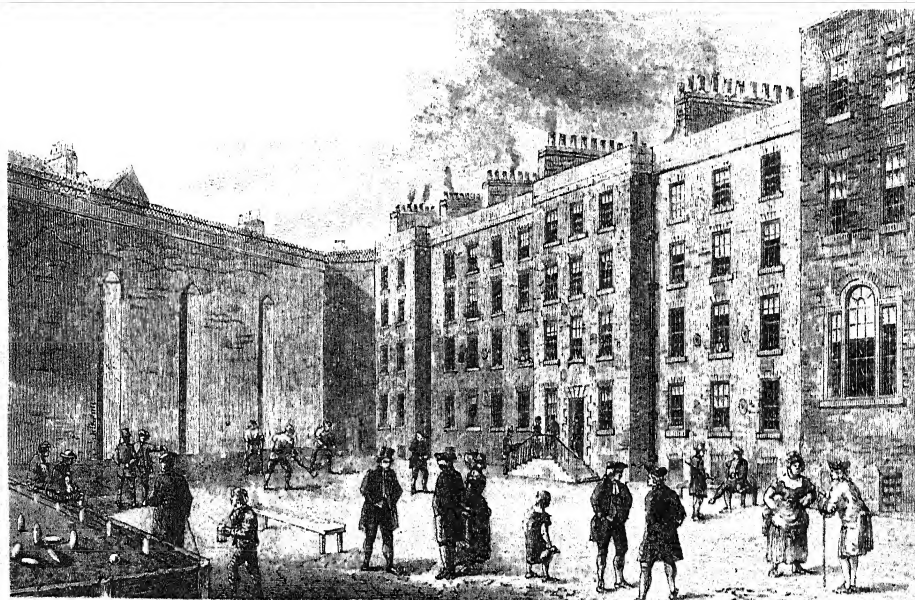
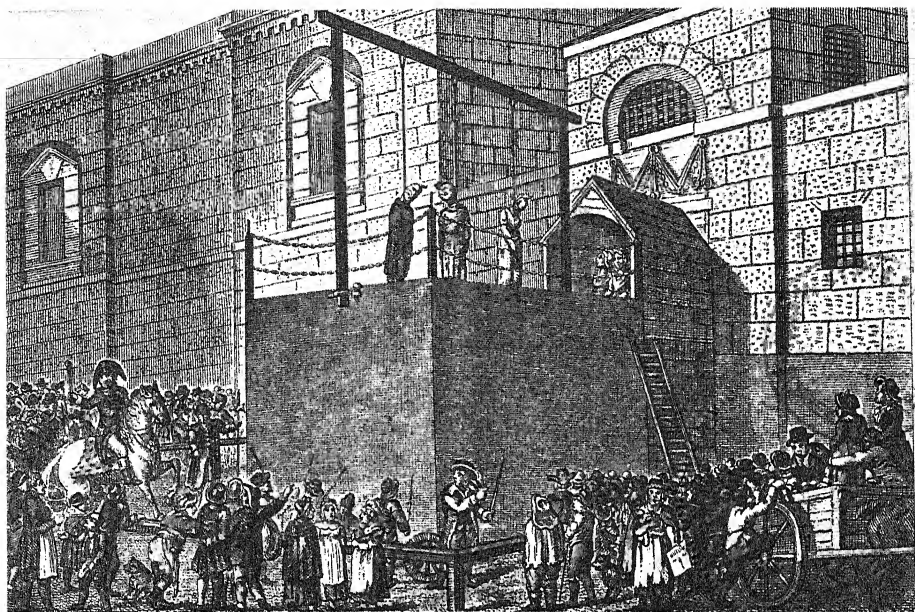
The horrible system of starving, torturing and finally pressing to death with heavy weights anyone who refused to plead was carried on into the eighteenth century. A man could not be tried if he refused to plead, and could not, therefore be found guilty and be deprived of his goods. A certain brave Major Strangeways chose to die in this way so that he might save his estates for his family, and in the Place collection there is a horrible account of the pressing of two men, who in the end agreed to plead guilty.

The brutality of the law of England in the eighteenth century and the condition of its prisons may well fill us with horror. It must be remembered, however, that there were some people who liked prison life. They found there companionship and conviviality and, as long as they had money, a slothful easy life.

The improved prison conditions of the nineteenth century with regular meals, hours, solitary confinement, cleanliness and hard work were greeted with little enthusiasm by the prisoner who could remember the licence of the old Newgate. The horrors of the gaol were merely the horrors of poverty-stricken London writ larger. What may well amaze us is the inhumanity which sanctioned countless executions and spared neither sex nor age.

"I never saw boys cry so much," said George Selwyn, that connoisseur of executions, when he had seen some hapless lads of fourteen hanged after the Gordon Riots, and there were instances of much younger children being put to death.

For the crime of murdering her husband a woman was burnt to death about the middle of the century. She had been guilty of petit treason, and in deference to her sex was spared the penalty meted out to Jacobite rebels. A verse



*An execution before the debtor's door, Newgate  
Fleet Prison: The Racquet Court*



## BRUTALITY OF THE LAWS

concerning the tender mercies of the wicked may occur to us, but we must remember how fatally easy it is for even good men to acquiesce in the evil which they see around them, especially when the evil is done in the name of the law.

## DOCTORS, MEDICINE, HEALTH

WE are inclined to consider the eighteenth century town as utterly insanitary, in fact the hotbed of disease, and compared with modern standards this was no doubt the case. In contrast, however, with the previous century, London at least began to show a marked improvement.

Dr. Heberden, writing in 1801, gave statistics which proved that the death rate had been lowered in the past fifty years from 50 per cent. to 29 per cent., and that the health of the people was very greatly improved.

We have spoken in another chapter of the increased water supply. Water was scarcely ever drunk, the poorest people insisting upon beer, however small; but the possibility of washing houses and clothes and occasionally the person must have had its effect upon the general health of the people.

The introduction of cheap cotton goods was an immense boon to the poor. In the old days filthy leather stays and quilted woollen petticoats lasted a lifetime and were never washed. The new fabrics were pretty, light, and easily cleaned, and the improvement in cleanliness and consequently in health after their introduction must have been considerable.

Sanitary arrangements were horrible; and towards the end of the century some attempts were made to install drainage and water-borne sewage. These efforts were primitive, and as nearly all the drains ended in cesspools or ran into the Thames the effects were disastrous. The river became an open sewer, so foul and pestilential that well-to-do residents fled from its banks to more salubrious parts of the metropolis, and Members of Parliament complained that they could never open their windows even in the hottest weather.

## SMALLPOX. INOCULATION

In spite of these things the death rate fell, and plague which had swept England in the seventeenth century never came back after the old city with its narrow streets and filthy houses had been destroyed. There were plenty of other illnesses which decimated the population. Smallpox, which had been a mild kind of disease in the seventeenth century, broke out in a most virulent form in the eighteenth. We do not know whether it was assuming a new phase or if the drinking of spirits to excess was a contributory cause of the change. Very few escaped from it; in London, the average number of cases was 15,000 in a year. It was computed that sixty persons out of every hundred caught smallpox, and that twenty out of that number died of it. Those who recovered were often most horribly disfigured.

"Must have had the smallpox," was frequently inserted in advertisements for servants, and a young woman whose face was not pitted by the disease was in a fair way to be considered a beauty.

In 1720 Lady Mary Wortley Montague came back to London full of the wonderful practice of inoculation which she had witnessed in Constantinople. This custom, new as it was to the citizens of London, had for long been observed by the peasants in parts of Scotland and Wales. The doctors were divided regarding its merits. Some were enthusiastic, others were doubtful about the righteousness of interfering with the laws of nature and the will of Providence.

Others, again, saw much in the practice which was objectionable. Inoculation produced a mild attack of smallpox and the patient was highly infectious. Doctors here and there provided houses where persons could spend the period after inoculation; but this was not by any means general, nor was the practice popular with the neighbours.

Daniel Sutton, who had nursing homes of this kind at Ingatestone in Essex and afterwards at Kensington Gore, was indicted at the Chelmsford assizes for spreading abroad the smallpox. The grand jury threw out the bill, and Sutton,

whose method of inoculation was considered the best, continued to make £2,000 a year by this kind of practice.

The majority of patients, however, stayed in their own homes and were a source of infection to their friends and neighbours. The matter for inoculation was almost always taken from a healthy child; but there were cases in which serious diseases had been spread by the practice. An ignorant practitioner might make too deep an incision and his instrument was seldom surgically clean.

In spite, however, of these dangers and drawbacks the practice of inoculation increased.

Princess Caroline, Lady Mary's friend, persuaded the King to pardon some condemned criminals if they would consent to be inoculated. The murderers being successfully recovered, the doctors next practised on the royal infants, and the treatment became general. It was not superseded until Jenner discovered vaccination in 1796. The practice of this, and the great improvements in cleanliness and sanitation in the nineteenth century, almost stamped out the dreaded disease.

In the early days of the eighteenth century it was very difficult to get fresh meat in the winter. There was little keep for beasts when the summer grass was gone, and a large number of cattle and sheep were killed in the autumn and salted down for winter food. There was also a prejudice against fresh fruit and vegetables, which were thought to be indigestible, and in London they were generally too dear for the poor to buy. The consequence of this unwholesome diet was the prevalence of scurvy.

With the improvement of agriculture, and the growing of potatoes the disease began to abate, and by the end of the century it was only to be found among sailors who had been compelled to live on salt junk and biscuits.

Another illness, which has happily disappeared from our midst, is typhus. It was known in the eighteenth century as putrid fever, spotted fever, and gaol or hospital fever. Medical opinion of the time was inclined to assert that they were three separate diseases; but they were really the same



## THE KING'S EVIL

and were caused by dirt and overcrowding. The gaols were decimated by the disease, it spread to the hospitals and was endemic in the poorer parts of London. The usual treatment for typhus and indeed for all fevers was to keep the patient in a warm dark room from which fresh air was rigidly excluded, to bleed and purge drastically and to support the strength by giving plenty of wine and meat. In the previous century, Sydenham had advocated a more rational treatment; but his reputation was much greater on the Continent than in England, and his advice does not seem to have been generally followed.

In 1774 the *Gentleman's Magazine* quotes from an article by John Lettsom on putrid fevers, in which the doctor urged that such diseases should be nursed in the open air if possible, or at least in well-ventilated rooms, that wine and meat should be forbidden, and water, lemonade and light foods be substituted.

"Such is Dr. Lettsom's method of treating putrid fever," says the editor, "and as it appears new to us and well supported by a great number of cases it is hoped that by making it thus generally and speedily known, we may be the means of saving lives."

In another chapter we shall speak of the old superstition, "the touching for the King's Evil." This disease was scrofula and to judge from the numbers who flocked to London to be touched by Queen Anne, it must have been extraordinarily rife in eighteenth-century England. It should be remembered, however, that all the people who came to be touched were presented with a piece of gold and that a diagnosis was by no means always correct.

Eczema or psoriasis might have been mistaken for scrofula by the doctors of those days, which would account for the large number of cures which were reported. The Queen usually touched in the spring when psoriasis is at its worst, and it might gradually disappear as the season advanced.

Hydrophobia is a disease which has mercifully disappeared from among us. Dr. Mead had "a certain cure for the bite

of a mad dog." The patient had to be blooded at the arm nine or ten ounces and drink a concoction of dried liver wort and black pepper in cow's milk every morning. He had then to go into a cold bath or cold spring every morning before taking any food ; but he need not remain in the bath for more than half a minute if the weather were cold.

In spite of these remedies and many others, a number of people died of hydrophobia, or were mercifully smothered by their friends. It was the one illness in which it was thought legitimate to shorten intolerable suffering, and the end was generally hastened.

There was yet another remedy, though this was not described as certain or recommended by Dr. Mead.

"For the bite of a mad dog, for either man or beast, take six ounces of rue, clean picked and bruised, four ounces of garlick peeled and bruised, four ounces of Venice treacle, and four ounces of filed pewter or scraped tin. Boil these in two quarts of the best ale, in a pan covered close over a gentle fire, for the space of an hour, then strain the ingredients from the liquor. Give eight or nine spoonfuls of it warm to a man or woman three mornings fasting. Eight or nine spoonfuls sufficient for the strongest and lesser quantity to those younger or of a weaker constitution, as you shall judge of their strength. Ten or twelve spoonfuls for a horse or bullock, three, four or five to a sheepdog or hog. This must be given within nine days after the bite. It seldom fails in man or beast. If you bind some of the ingredients on the wound, it will be so much the better."

There were cases in which "the man recovered of the bite, the dog it was that died."

Distemper was sometimes mistaken for rabies, and often a poor animal was driven nearly mad by ill treatment, and rushed snarling and barking through the streets. Until the discovery of Pasteur and the modern stringent quarantine regulations, hydrophobia was a very real danger.

Thrush, which is hardly ever seen now, was so common in the eighteenth century that it was said that everyone must have it either at birth or death. As a matter of fact it was

an infantile disease occurring over the mouth and tongue, a kind of fungus, caused generally by malnutrition and lack of cleanliness.

Ague or malaria, also known as marsh fever, was a widespread disease and was common in London. Then and for many a year afterwards the Essex marshes were undrained and several districts which have been built upon for a century or more were then swamps where men shot snipe or lay out in punts watching for the wild duck.

There was also a great coming and going between London and the Low Countries, which were then the breeding grounds of the malaria mosquito.

Consumption, though somewhat reduced during the century, took a terrible toll of young lives. The usual method of treatment was to shut the patient away from fresh air, in a warm room and to bleed freely. There were, however, a few doctors who protested against this practice and recommended the open air and even sent their patients to Margate for sea bathing or to the Bristol hot springs.

The death rate among young children was very high. Smellie, who was the founder of scientific midwifery in England, did much to improve the practice of obstetrics, but that branch of the medical profession was left very much to ignorant women. The unfortunate patient was

“covered up close in bed with additional clothes, the curtains are drawn round the bed and pinned together, every crevice in the windows and door is stopped close, not excepting even the key hole, the windows are guarded not only with shutters and curtains, but even with blankets the more effectively to exclude the fresh air.”

Babies were rolled up tight in swaddling clothes and kept in the same dreadful atmosphere, and bits of butter, sugar or caudle were forced down the throats of newly-born infants. In vain did the more enlightened doctors protest and recommend fresh air, clean clothes and breast feeding of babies. To bring up infants by hand in those days was to court disaster; indeed, Dr. Cadogan in his *Essay on Nursing*, which

is extraordinarily modern in its outlook though it was written in 1747, considered that any child deprived of its natural food would almost certainly die. As the substitute for mother's milk was pap, made of bread and water and milk with a large quantity of brown sugar added, it is not surprising that newly-born infants did not thrive on it. The wretched children were dosed with Godfrey's Cordial or Daffey's Elixir when they were suffering from acute indigestion and the twelve feet of linen wound round their unfortunate bodies.

Daffey's Elixir, according to the wrapper round the bottle, was "much recommended to the public by Dr. King, physician to King Charles II, and the late learned and ingenious Dr. Radcliffe."

"The true elixir"—there were several rivals—was sold "at the 'Hand and Pen' in Maiden Lane, Covent Garden, and at many Coffee Houses, also at Mr. John Waters, Perfumer at the 'Naked Boy and Orange Tree' near the 'Maypole' in the Strand." It was made of senna, jalap, aniseed, caraway seeds and juniper berries, steeped in alcohol, to which treacle and water were prudently added, and it seems to have been much used.

The treatments advocated by some doctors were amazing. When Thomas Holcroft suffered from asthma he tells us that "an intelligent surgeon made an incision on each side of each leg below the knee." His cure, he adds, "which was aided by my youth and cheerful temperament, was progressively visible from week to week."

Dr. Wilmot ordered his consumptive patients to drink spa water with milk and once a day with vitriol. Vinegar and camphor were prescribed as remedies for typhus fever, and Sir John Colbatch, who was physician at the Westminster Hospital, recommended mistletoe as a cure for epilepsy.

In another chapter we shall deal with quacks, but even reputable doctors advocated the most amazing remedies.

Sir Hans Sloane, who was Fellow of the Royal Society and President of the College of Physicians, possessed a specimen

of the earth from the Island of Lemnos, which he declared was an antidote for poisons.

He even tried it on a condemned criminal, who, having swallowed a large dose of poison, was given some of the earth mixed in old wine.

"Although extremely tormented with it," says Sloane, "yet the medicine prevailing, he recovered and was delivered to his friends."

"Bezoar stones," which were generally taken from the goats of India and Persia, though monkey Bezoars from Madagascar would serve, were another antidote which Sloane advocated. They were ground to powder and sold for as much as £5 an ounce.

A mineral found in the Alps acted most beneficially in cases of smallpox,

"having marks on it," as Sloane said, "like the smallpox and therefore said to hinder that distemper from injuring the face if kept about the person of the diseased. If hung about the person it makes the smallpox come favourable and hinders their being marked from its signature."

When such remedies were commended by physicians of standing, it is not wonderful that sensible men distrusted doctors' prescriptions.

"Your pills have done wonders," said Henderson the actor to the fashionable physician Sir John Eliot. "I have even survived them."

Steele, Addison, Goldsmith and other writers were constantly ridiculing the absurdities and pretensions of some medical men; but as the century advanced, the profession gradually emerged from its slough of ignorance and the humblest apothecary at the end of the period would hesitate to prescribe some of the remedies advocated by the court physician in the reign of Anne.

Dr. Berkeley's tar water was introduced into England by the Bishop of Cloyne to whom Pope in a moment of unwonted urbanity ascribed "every virtue under Heaven."

He had seen it used by the natives of Rhode Island, and when smallpox was raging in his diocese he pressed it gratuitously upon the unfortunate peasantry. He published a book advocating its merits and, though the doctors did not entirely uphold it, it became very popular.

"The Bishop of Cloyne," we read, "has made it as fashionable as going to Vauxhall or Ranelagh."

Alas! for fashionable cures and medicaments, they seldom last long. Mrs. Carter writes thus to her friend Miss Talbot about the decline of tar water :

"I thought the strong appetite for this medicine had been greatly worn off, and that folks now were universally agreed in the fashionable fury of drinking up the sea. I intend to persevere as far as a hog's head will go, before I pronounce that it does me no good. Would it not do just as well, if one was to swallow a 60 gun man-of-war."

Mrs. Carter seems to have taken a mildly satirical interest in fashionable cures.

"Was you ever electrified?" she asks. "We have an itinerant philosopher here who knocks people down for the moderate consideration of 6*d.*, and men and women and children are electrified out of their senses."

Electric treatment seems to us so modern that it is curious to find it advocated in the eighteenth century. John Wesley had a "galvanic apparatus" which was used by thousands of patients.

Purging and bleeding were also popular remedies. Most people were blooded as a matter of course in the spring and the autumn. It eliminated "the humours" from the system and was the treatment advocated alike for fevers, consumption and broken limbs. No doubt a great many people habitually ate and drank too much, and this very lowering treatment may have been beneficial.

Some doctors went to the other extreme and ordered their gouty patients to take an additional glass of wine after dinner.

Quinine or Jesuits' Bark, as it was called, had been introduced into England in the seventeenth century and like other

medicines it became a sort of panacea. Lettsom prescribed it for every kind of fever ; but by the end of the century it was used chiefly for malaria and as a sort of general tonic. Physic was extraordinarily popular in the eighteenth century: Garrick, according to Lord Camden, died of the "immoderate amount of medicine he had swallowed for many years."

There were various theories as to infection. Many doctors inclined to the old Greek idea that epidemics were due to climate, heat, damp and other natural causes. There was a school, however, which taught that disease was carried by minute particles which were called formites. Little appears to have been known about them except that they could be destroyed by fresh air, soap and water and various disinfectants. No reputable doctor ever suggested that they might be living organisms ; but Katterfelto, the quack, had evidently arrived at this conclusion, though his microscopic exhibits were certainly curious. He invited the public to view the wonders displayed by his microscope, when he declared that "Those insects which caused the late influenza will be seen as large as birds."

In another chapter we have mentioned the many spas which abounded in and around London. Some of them were purely pleasure gardens, and in all a certain amount of feasting and amusement prevailed. Doctors, however, recommended the taking of waters as a specific in many diseases. Rich people went to Bath or Tunbridge Wells or even to continental spas ; those of smaller means took lodgings at Hampstead, Islington or Kilburn, or drove down to Bermondsey or Lambeth.

Sir Samuel Romilly, who lived as a youth in Marylebone, writes thus : "At six o'clock or sooner, I rise, go into the cold bath ; walk to Islington to drink a little calybeate water, from which I have found great benefit."

No doubt the waters were beneficial. It was the only time in their lives that many of the patients had ever tasted such a liquid.

The learning and status of the doctor varied enormously.

There were men who enjoyed an European reputation and whose names are well known to modern medical science. There was Lettsom, that versatile genius, man of letters, founder of hospitals, prison reformer, the champion of Jenner and vaccination, a Fellow of the Royal Society.

There was Smellie, the obstetrician, who trained nearly a thousand students, and who made London rather than Paris the school of midwifery.

There were the two Hunter brothers, William and John. William, who "conceived that a man may do infinitely more good to the public by teaching his art than by practising it," left behind him a great reputation as a lecturer and two or three well-known treatises on the particular branch of his profession.

His more celebrated brother John may be called the first great English surgeon. He rescued the profession from a state of inferiority in association with barbers and quacks, and raised it to a position of equality with that of his medical confrères. His great collection was bought for the Company of Surgeons, and may still be seen at the Royal College, and the Hunterian Oration preserves his name and his great attainments before the minds of his countrymen.

Pott, who gave his name to a fracture and to a disease, was a pupil of Hunter and was thought to have improved in some ways upon the methods of his celebrated master.

Dr. William Cadogan as early as 1747 was insisting upon cleanliness in the treatment of infants. They should be fed, he said, only six times in the twenty-four hours, and never at night. Older children should be given plenty of vegetables and fresh fruit. Much of his teaching might be taken to heart by the mothers of the present day.

Radcliffe, who annoyed the Princess Anne by telling her that her illness was nothing but the vapours, and whose money went to found the Radcliffe Infirmary and the Observatory at Oxford; really belongs to the seventeenth century. He died in 1714.

These men and many more whom we could mention were



the ornaments of their profession. It was an age when personality counted for very much, and self-help was very often the only kind of assistance which any man could obtain. We may smile at the ignorance and absurdities of some eighteenth-century medical men, but we should rather admire the great ability of the more enlightened doctors and their perseverance in the face of ignorance and every kind of difficulty.

There were, of course, men at the other end of the scale, who, beyond a few formulas, a jargon of medical Latin, and some rough rule of thumb, knew nothing of their profession. A man could set up as an apothecary with very little learning and experience. It was not until 1815 that an Act was passed which obliged him to pass a qualifying examination before beginning practice.

The usual procedure for a youth wishing to study medicine was to get himself apprenticed to a physician or surgeon. In some cases a large sum was paid as apprenticeship fee. In 1731 Mrs. Margaret Freeman paid as much as £367 10s. when her son entered upon his indentures with Thomas Bigg, surgeon, at Barber Surgeon's Hall.

When he was out of his indentures the young man might perhaps walk a hospital or attend classes in medicine or anatomy. Most of the great doctors and surgeons whom we have mentioned took pupils and there was much competition to attend their lectures. Ambitious men who had sufficient money went to these classes, were pupils at the London hospitals or even went abroad to study under Boerhaave at Leyden or Gregoire in Paris.

Societies were founded in the eighteenth century for the discussion of many things, scientific, philosophical and antiquarian. In 1746 the naval surgeons who had few opportunities for study founded a society in London, and engaged John Hunter to lecture to them. The subscription was a guinea and one per cent. of any prize money the surgeon might win.

Various similar societies were established, the most famous

being the Medical Society founded by Lettsom in 1773, which still flourishes.

The first papers read before the gathering were one on "Observations on the Loss of the Voice," by Sir John Millar, another on the "Cause of Pain in Rheumatism," by Lettsom himself.

The progress of medicine was much hampered by the fact that there were no faculties at either University for its proper study. It was most difficult, moreover, for a doctor or surgeon to obtain a body for dissection and study. The bodies of murderers were supposed to be handed over to Surgeon's Hall; but strenuous efforts were made by the friends and relatives of criminals to prevent this.

The United Company of Barber Surgeons had, moreover, made a by-law that no human bodies could be dissected anywhere outside their own hall. When the company was dissolved this ruling was, of course, at an end.

Some practitioners bought a body where they could, without any particular enquiry, and the resurrection men carried on their nefarious trade long before the days of Burke and Hare.

William Hunter generally procured a subject for each of his pupils under his own superintendence, but other surgeons were less fortunate, and had to content themselves with wax figures.

The *Daily Courant* of 1719 published the following advertisement :

"To the Curious. The Sieur Desnoues has lately received from Paris four new anatomical preparations in wax work never seen before. The sight, helped with a clear explanation, gives in a moment to both sexes a true idea of the human body.

"1. The anatomy of a woman to the waste where all parts of the brain may be seen and taken out of their place and set back again.

"There is also a curious dissection of the eye.

"This figure alone makes a wonderful piece of work.

"2. Two handsome heads fit to give in a moment the true

## BODIES FOR DISSECTION

knowledge of the structure of the brain, and perceive by a new method the first rise of the nerves from it.

“3. The anatomy of a child newly born. . . . Besides several new rareties never seen before, all being an addition to the former five figures, everyone of natural bigness and colour.

“N.B.—This whole performance has been thirty years a-making. Attendance is given at the Blue Ball down on the left-hand in Beauford Buildings near Southampton Street in the Strand.

“These figures have as fine a prospect by candle as by day light.”

These wax effigies were not of much use to students, and when they could, doctors and surgeons tried to procure dead bodies. There were instances of men bequeathing or even selling their bodies for anatomical purposes.

James Brooke, who was in prison under sentence of death, wrote as follows to a neighbouring surgeon :

“Sir,—Being informed that you are the only surgeon in this city that anatomises men ; and being under the present unhappy circumstances, and in a very mean condition, would gladly live as long as I can : but by all appearances I am to be executed next March, having no friends on earth that will speak a word to save my life, nor send me a morsel of bread to keep life and soul together until that fatal day, so if you will vouchsafe to come hither, I will gladly sell you my body (being whole and sound) to be ordered at your discretion ; knowing that it will rise again at the general resurrection, as well from your house as from the grave.”

Hospitals play an enormous part in the medical life of to-day, and in the eighteenth century they took their place, though it was a much smaller one.

At the beginning of the century there were no hospitals at all in the provinces and only two in London, St. Thomas's and St. Bartholomew's.

In 1714 John Bellers the Quaker, who urged the sovereigns of Europe to found a League of Nations, advocated the establishment of hospitals all over the kingdom and in

## DOCTORS, MEDICINE, HEALTH

particular at Oxford and Cambridge. His advice was taken to heart, and the eighteenth century is famous for the number of hospitals which were founded.

In London the Westminster Infirmary was opened in 1720 in a small house in Petty France, for which a rent of £22 a year was paid. It received twelve patients and had a staff consisting of a matron and one nurse, one maidservant, a messenger and a consulting physician. The matrons and nurses died in a distressing succession. The work was no doubt hard, and in the eighteenth century the hospital nurse was often very much as Dickens described her. She was allowed by the hospital three pints of small beer a day, and this amount was also given to the patients, besides such gin, porter or other liquors as they might fancy.

The neighbourhood was very unhealthy, low lying and swampy, afflicted with endemic typhus, and quotidian, tertian and quartan agues. An open sewer ran past the hospital and a next-door neighbour kept thirty-six pigs. These were apparently regarded as necessary evils; but the hospital was concerned about its bugs and contracted with one Thomas Tiffen to remove them. He did his best, but reported that it was an impossible task as the bedsteads were all made of wood.

Little things like this did not much worry hospital authorities. The staff at St. Thomas's thought Mark Akenside most fussy and unreasonable when he objected to his pupils spitting on the hospital floor; but as they pointed out to each other, he was a brutal, overbearing fellow, and in any case what could be expected from a doctor who was also a poet?

Guy's Hospital was founded in 1724. Thomas Guy, as we all know, was one of the few fortunate people who sold out of the South Sea Company before the crash. He left part of his large fortune to found the hospital which bears his name.

In 1789 Howard published his tour of British and foreign hospitals. He describes Guy's as being infested with bugs, and the wards very low, some only nine and a half feet high.

## HOSPITALS

On the other hand, it had very good baths, and that recent invention, the water closet.

St. George's Hospital was founded in 1733, and was known at first as the "Hospital at Hyde Park Corner." The wards, Howard said, were narrow, the floors sanded and the walls dirty. It does not seem to have been afflicted with bugs, and it had a fine cold bath, which was never used. In 1791 the hospital had admitted 1,078 patients with recommendations and 297 on account of accidents. Accidents no doubt covered brawls and fights, for the number of street accidents in that part of London could not have been very great.

The London Hospital was founded in 1740 to supply the needs of a large district which was growing up among the fields which sloped to the river bank. When Howard went to see it it had eighteen wards ; but only seven of them were used. Medical and surgical cases were nursed together, which the most advanced doctors of those days did not countenance. The walls needed whitewash, and there were no cisterns for water. There was one bath in a dirty cellar but it was seldom used.

Middlesex Hospital was founded in 1745 as a smallpox hospital, but it afterwards became a general hospital. When Howard visited it, it was badly in need of funds. Many of the wards were closed, the rooms were dirty and ill-ventilated, the bedsteads of wood, old and unclean. By the end of the century it would seem to have improved, and it had started the cancer charity which has been associated with its name ever since.

The London Lock Hospital was founded in 1746, and its Rescue Home in 1787.

There were also the maternity hospitals, the British Lying-in, the City of London, Queen Charlotte's, the Royal Maternity and the General.

There is no doubt that these hospitals did much to reduce the appalling death rate among infants, and to spread a little enlightenment among nurses and midwives.

The condition of hospitals could be appalling, dirty,

unventilated, vermin ridden, with closed windows and unwashed floors. The patients were seldom if ever washed, for washing was weakening. They ate what they fancied or what their friends brought in, which included much alcoholic refreshment. The nurses were generally rough, and often drunken.

Patients were expected to bring a letter of recommendation from a subscriber before they could be admitted, though some hospitals would take in urgent cases or accidents without a letter. Fees were not often charged, but something had to be paid for washing, and the nurses expected presents. Patients, moreover, were obliged to hand over a sum in case they died, as a security for burial.

The horrors of surgery in an age when there were no anæsthetics and few antiseptics can hardly be imagined. Operations were only performed in cases of direst necessity, and were carried out at the utmost possible speed. The unfortunate patients were held down or strapped upon a table. The London Hospital, indeed, still possesses the bell which was rung to summon the "holders down" before an operation. Few hospital patients recovered from operations, and the horror of these and of hospital treatment in general lasted well on into the nineteenth century.

The only hospitals which were really well managed were the Lying-in Hospitals. These attracted a better type of woman than the "watcher" in the ordinary institution. Monthly nurses and midwives went out into the homes of the well-to-do, where a certain standard of cleanliness was expected. These hospitals, moreover, were usually run by a committee of ladies. Indeed, with that delicacy which existed side by side with the greatest coarseness these maternity institutions were often referred to as "ladies' charities."

Of children's hospitals in the eighteenth century there were none, nor were they admitted into general hospitals. It was thought that to snatch a young, sick child away from its mother was too cruel and barbarous a proceeding to be tolerated in a Christian country.

The two large mental hospitals were Bethlehem or Bedlam as it was always called, and St. Luke's.

Sophie de la Roche in her English journal gives a favourable account of the former asylum. It was under the superintendence of a Dr. Monroe, who insisted upon light, air and cleanliness, and that the patients should be treated with the utmost gentleness and humanity. The rooms were bright and comfortable and the inmates were encouraged to read, write and occupy themselves harmlessly. Sophie de la Roche found Mrs. Nicholson, who had attempted to murder George III, quietly reading Shakespeare and asking for another supply of pens.

It must be owned that such a favourable example of an asylum was rare, though Cowper declared that he was very well treated at Dr. Cotton's establishment at St. Alban's and he used to call it "the place of his second nativity."

More often unhappily the insane were treated with a callous cruelty which is almost unbelievable. Public asylums were bad enough, and Bedlam was not always under the humane direction of Dr. Munroe. Indeed, Hogarth's terrible picture of it in the *Rake's Progress* is one of the most painful things that great artist ever portrayed.

Probably the worst places were some private mad-houses. Dr. Cruden of Concordance fame escaped from such a place at Bethnal Green, dragging with him along the road to Aldgate the post of the bed to which he had been chained.

These private asylums were never inspected and frequently perfectly sane persons were incarcerated in them.

There was the case of Mrs. Hawley, who went out with her husband and her mother for a jaunt to Turnham Green. She was decoyed into a house which she then found was a private asylum. The unhappy woman managed to communicate with friends, who moved for a writ of Habeas Corpus. The case came for trial and the keeper of the mad-house admitted that he took anyone who was brought in without any kind of enquiry.

Another woman, a Mrs. Mills, came to Sir John Fielding

to complain that her husband had decoyed her to the door of an asylum. Suspecting what it might be, she refused to enter, when the keeper of the place threw her down, dragged her up the steps by her feet, and proceeded to handcuff her. Then, after being abused in the foulest terms by the house-keeper, she was locked into a room for the night. On the following morning some tea was brought to her by an unhappy woman who said that she had been imprisoned in that place for many years by her husband. Meanwhile Mills had apparently repented of his cruelty for he came that day and fetched his wife home. She remembered the poor woman, Mrs. Ewebank, who had brought her the tea, and she went to Sir John Fielding. Mrs. Ewebank was set at liberty and the proprietors of the mad-house were prosecuted. Here and there chance or powerful friends aided an unhappy inmate to escape from these places, but numbers must have languished miserably and died in wretchedness.

People of any humanity kept their mentally sick at home, and among the poor they frequently wandered about, a danger to themselves and sometimes to others. There were few Dr. Monroes to insist upon kind and considerate treatment.

Even the unhappy King George III was treated with great harshness.

Almost as important as the hospitals were the dispensaries ; in fact, in some ways they achieved even more far-reaching results.

"The dispensaries in the metropolis are numerous," says a writer in 1802, but his remarks would apply equally to the end of our century.

"From the eastern extremity of Limehouse to the western of Millbank and on the north from Islington and Somers Town, to the south as far as Lambeth, and by means of the Greenwich Dispensary, to Newington and Peckham, including a space of nearly fifty square miles, a system of medical relief is extended to the poor unknown to any other part of the globe. About 50,000 poor persons are thus annually supplied with medicine and advice gratis, one-third of whom, at least, are attended in their own homes."



## THE DISPENSARIES

The boon to the poor was incalculable; but the doctor and also the general public were to a certain extent the gainers. The experience acquired by a medical man in the slums of London was very great. True, the dispensary doctor often remained the poor man's doctor all his life. He had little influence in hospital management, he was not a member of the Royal College, nor yet of the Medical Society, but this was not always the case. Men like Lettsom and Fothergill gave ungrudgingly of their time and skill to serve the poor, and brought the benefit of their experience to the improvement of medical practice, and the advance of clinical knowledge.

Among much brutality and callousness, we must notice a great advance in the care of the poor, and some stirring of the national conscience as regards the conditions of life in the slums of our great city.

Indeed, the eighteenth century might well be proud of its improved medical knowledge, of the hospitals it had built, of the lowering of its death rate, and the gradual elimination of disease.

## SUPERSTITIONS AND QUACKERY

FOLKLORE and superstitions usually flourished in the country, and were not so widespread in the towns. There, among the bustle and hurry of life, men and women had less leisure to sit over the fire and tell the old tales of witches and fairies, which had been handed down to them by their parents. Education too, though by no means general, had to some small extent permeated the mass of the people. There were some among the artisans and even the labourers, who could read and write and a few who read extensively. We do not hear much of witchcraft in eighteenth-century London, though in the country unfortunate women were still being tortured and ducked in horse ponds. There were fewer curious customs relating to birth, marriage, death or illness. Still, Londoners cherished some ancient superstitions and folklore.

A lucky day must be chosen for a wedding.

“Marriage” according to an old almanac, “comes in on the thirteenth day of January; at Septuagesima Sunday it is out again till Low Sunday, at which time it comes in, and goes not out till Rogation Sunday, thence it is forbidden until Trinity Sunday; from whence it is unforbidden until Advent Sunday; but it then goes out and comes not in again until the thirteenth day of January next following.”

This curious idea that the greater festivals of the church were unlucky seasons for a marriage may have had some old ecclesiastical significance. There were other superstitions about marriage. The bride must be drawn to church by a pair of grey horses, her bed must be decked with ribbons of blue and green, and sprigs of rosemary. The guests wore nosegays or cockades of rosemary at the church.

The unfortunate newly born infant was the victim of many superstitions. The day of birth was very important, and if

a horoscope were to be drawn the exact hour and minute must be noted. No infant was to be taken out until it went to be christened, for if it unluckily took a chill and died—and the open air was known to be most prejudicial—its soul was condemned to a sort of limbo, and rushed crying with the wind around house and tree-tops. A baby's right hand must not be washed, so that it should gather riches throughout its life, and its nails must not be cut for a year at least, but should be bitten off for fear that it grow up light fingered. If it went into a strange house its mouth must be filled with salt, and a piece of coral hung round the neck was a wonderful protection against evil spirits and all kinds of ill-luck.

The innumerable customs in the country, whereby a maiden might obtain some inkling, through dreams or looking-glasses or other means, of the personality of her future husband, did not obtain to any great extent in town. On June 29, however, a large number of girls might have been seen, crawling on their knees over Primrose Hill looking for a black plantain root to put under their pillows at night, whereby they might dream of their future husbands. Many a maiden, on sleeping in a strange bed, would tie her garter—it must have been very long—nine times round the bedpost, with nine knots, repeating as she did so

This knot I knit, this knot I tie,  
To see my love as he goes by,  
In his apparel and array  
As he walks in every day.

Superstitions about illness were widespread. In the days of Anne, large numbers of unfortunate people, who suffered from scrofula, flocked to London to be touched for, "the King's Evil," as the disease was called. The monarchs of England and France were the only two in Europe who could touch for the Evil. Pious St. Louis had brought back the miraculous gift from Palestine and transmitted it to his posterity. Edward III, who claimed the throne of France, through his mother, Isabella of Valois, declared that he had also inherited the wonderful power of healing the King's Evil. In early days, the monarch had actually washed the

diseased flesh of his suffering people, but Henry VII disliked this pious practice and from his day onwards the King merely touched his subjects, while the chaplain read prayers from the Office of Touching for the Evil. This service had been incorporated in the Prayer Book. It had at first been held in the Chapel of St. James's Palace; but the Chapel was small and the crowd unwashed. The Queen, therefore, directed that the ceremony should be held in the Banqueting Hall, and declared her willingness to "touch as many of my poor people as I can before the hot weather comes." The sufferers passed before the Queen as she sat in state surrounded by her court officials and chaplains and she touched or stroked each in turn. A chaplain who knelt at her side had a supply of medals which hung from white ribbons. In the old days this touch piece was the Angel, a coin of the realm stamped with the image of St. Michael, but as time went on, a medal was substituted. The patient wore this round his neck, and no doubt in some cases he recovered from his disease. Scrofula is, of course, tubercular; but in those days many another ailment could have been confounded with it. Anne was the last English sovereign to touch for the Evil. The Hanoverians declined to do it, and William III, when approached, had refused, saying shortly, "God give you better health and more sense." He was a sceptic in the matter; but a number of persons of education believed in the cure. Swift applied to the Duchess of Ormond on behalf of a little boy whom he wished Queen Anne to touch, and Johnson's mother was advised, by a well-known Lichfield doctor, to bring her son to London for that purpose. The exiled Stuarts still touched, and a thin stream of pilgrims travelled to St. Germain's. Scrofula might also be cured, it was said, by the touch of the hand of a man who had been hanged, and this was also a cure for goitre and swollen glands. Many people attended executions in order to obtain these gruesome relics. We hear also of a girl who had lost one of her toes owing to "having the Evil in her feet from her infancy." She was to be sent to a hospital for treatment;

## ASTROLOGY

"but a beggar woman coming to the door and hearing of it, said that if they would cut off the hind leg and the fore leg on the contrary side of that, of a toad, and wear them in a silken bag about her neck it would certainly cure her; but it was to be observed that, on the toad losing its legs, it was to be turned loose abroad, and as it pined, wasted and died, the distemper would likewise waste and die, which happened accordingly, for the girl was entirely cured by it, never having had the Evil afterwards."

There were all sorts of other strange remedies. Mrs. Delaney recommended as a cure for the ague, "a spider put into a goose quill, well sealed and secured, and hung about the child's neck as low as the pit of the stomach." Putting onions in the sufferers' boots was considered an infallible remedy for whooping-cough, and fits could be prevented by wearing silver rings, made of the money which had been placed in a church offertory.

At the beginning of the century, astrology was still treated as a science. Dr. Mead, the President of the Royal Society, published, as late as 1748, a treatise "concerning the influence of the sun and moon upon human bodies, and the diseases thereby produced." In spite of Swift's ridicule, in his predictions for the year 1708 by Isaac Bickerstaff Esquire, astrology had many adherents. Books and magazines were published on the pseudo science, and as late as 1774 prophecies of political events were inserted in the *London Evening Post*. A great number of astrological almanacs were published, and the original "Old Moore," whose name was Henry Andrews, was born in 1744. Something of the old superstition still lingers with us, and words of astrological significance are to be found embedded in our language. We talk of ill-starred, saturnine, moon-struck and lunatic. The bleak materialism of men like Hume and Godwin never really permeated eighteenth-century thought. Superior men might scoff at superstitions; but the mass of the people believed in them implicitly. Their credulity would have been amazing, if we had not a hundred superstitions in our own day. The ignorance of the people fostered the most amazing

beliefs. There was the rabbit woman, Mary Toft, who declared that, at various times, she had given birth to twenty-seven rabbits. She even imposed upon the King's physician, who had been sent to attend her in one of these amazing confinements. The King then caused her to be brought to London and placed in a house in Leicester Fields. Despite its rural name, young rabbits were not so easily come by, or the woman was more carefully watched, at any rate she confessed to a fraud, and was sent to prison for six months. The amazing thing about the affair is that the King should have concerned himself in such an absurd piece of trickery, and that his physician should have condescended to investigate a palpable fraud.

Dr. Johnson seems to have preserved an open mind on the subject of apparitions. He was glad to have exposed the Cock Lane ghost, as he was convinced that the whole thing was a fraud; but Boswell tells us "he was willing to enquire into the truth of any relation of supernatural agency, a general belief in which has prevailed in all nations and ages."

The Cock Lane ghost purported to be the spirit of one Fanny Kent who, according to common rumour, had been murdered in a house in Cock Lane. It acted through the medium of a girl, who declared that

"the spirit ran up and down her back like a mouse, and made various noises for the detection of some enormous crime . . . The supposed spirit had before publicly promised by an affirmative knock, that it would attend one of the gentlemen into the vault under the church of St. John Clerkenwell, where the body is deposited and give a token of her presence there by a knock upon her coffin."

Crowds of people flocked into the small room where the girl was lying whom, as Horace Walpole said, "they are murdering by inches in such insufferable heat and stench." The rector of Clerkenwell had her removed to his own house, where she was put to bed by several ladies, who watched her carefully. Johnson and his fellow-investigators, coming into the room, insisted upon her hands being held out of bed in full view of the company.

“From that time, though the spirit was very solemnly required to manifest its existence by appearance, by impression on the hand or body of any present, by scratches, knocks, or any other agency, no evidence of any preternatural power was exhibited.”

The party then made their way to the vault, and though the spirit had been “very seriously advertised that the person to whom the promise was made of striking the coffin, was then about to visit the vault, nothing whatever of any supernatural kind happened.” Johnson exposed what he held to be a fraud, in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, and elsewhere, and no doubt the intelligent were suitably impressed. The masses, however, still believed implicitly in ghosts, portents and witchcraft. The father of the girl was condemned to one year's imprisonment and to stand three times in the pillory. The mob, however, very far from pelting him with the usual rotten eggs, and dead cats, of which there seemed to be such a plentiful supply in London, went round and raised a subscription for him.

Another ghost story came from Stockwell. Here coal scuttles, lanterns, eggs, pewter plates, cups and saucers danced about and broke themselves indiscriminately. To those concerned and to the neighbours, the whole affair was plainly witchcraft; but years afterwards, a certain Anne Robinson, or Romsden, who had been a maid in the house where these phenomena occurred, confessed that she had arranged the whole affair by means of horse-hairs and wires. If this were indeed the case, the girl must have been amazingly adroit, and everyone else very stupid and unobservant.

There was no Society for Psychical Research in those days and it is impossible to judge of the truth of the ghost stories which have come down to us. Many of them were, no doubt, pure imposture. St. Andrew's Holborn had an apparition which terrified everyone, until it was found to be a boy in a white shirt leaping among the tombstones. At Hammer-smith there was also a churchyard ghost. One of the parishioners resolved to watch for it with a gun, and seeing something

## SUPERSTITIONS AND QUACKERY

white cross the churchyard he fired. His victim was a harmless bricklayer wearing the white frock of his trade.

Witchcraft, though it was not so widespread as in the country, had its practitioners in London. They were generally called wise women and confined themselves to foretelling the future and curing minor illnesses. At the present day, there are hundreds of their descendants; but the eighteenth-century wise woman often knew a great deal about herbs and simples and old remedies. She journeyed into the country and collected plants, which she knew were efficacious as the cure for many illnesses. She certainly did less harm than some doctors and in many cases was quite successful. Occasionally she would deal in contraceptives, which are not the modern invention they are thought to be. The sale and advertisement of these things seemed to have been fairly common in eighteenth-century London. Other wise women confined themselves to charms and amulets, the pine cone averted the evil eye, amber preserved children from danger, an infant's caul insured the safety of seafaring men, and brought prosperity to lawyers. The necklace of orris root, hung round a baby's neck, prevented convulsions. Many of these sibyls dealt in spells. A few words written on a scrap of paper and worn next to the skin, warded off disease, or captured the affection of errant lovers. The word Abracadabra was supposed to be very effectual. It was of immense antiquity, and Q. Severus Semonicus recommended its use as a specific against ague and toothache. The name was written on parchment in the form given below and the patient wore it hung round his neck.

A	B	R	A	C	A	D	A	B	R	A
	A	B	R	A	C	A	D	A	B	R
		A	B	R	A	C	A	D	A	B
			A	B	R	A	C	A	D	
				A	B	R	A	C	A	
					A	B	R	A	C	
						A	B	R	A	
							A	B	R	
								A	B	
									A	



It is curious that such an ancient superstition should have lingered on in eighteenth-century England. Love philtres and potions to induce reciprocal affection in a beloved object were often provided by the wise woman. She would foretell the future by the cards, by palmistry, or coffee grounds. A girl who had consulted one of these soothsayers, describes how she saw her future husband. "I have seen him," she says, "several times in coffee grounds, with a sword by his side, and he was once at the bottom of a teacup in a coach and six with two footmen behind it."

A contributor to the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1731, describes a friend of his visiting a lady and her company. They were

"in close cabal over their coffee, the rest very intent upon one, who by her dress and intelligence, he guessed to be a tirewoman, to which she added the secret of divining by coffee ground. She was then in full inspiration and with much solemnity, observing the atoms round the cup. On the one hand sat a widow, on the other a maiden lady, both attentive to the predictions to be given of their future estate. The lady (his acquaintance) though married, was no less earnest in contemplating her cup than the other two. They assured him that every cast of the cup is a picture of all one's life to come and every transaction and circumstance is delineated with the strictest certainty."

The wise woman's activities were generally harmless ; but there were persons who carried on, under this name, a horrible trade in abortion. There were others who made wax figures. Anyone who had an enemy, whom they wished to destroy, could go to this woman and order an image of their victim. There were two methods of procedure. The figure could be slowly melted over a flame, when the person whom it represented would fade and die ; or pins might be stuck through the wax. In this case the unfortunate victim would be seized with various cramps and pains, and would die in agony. There was a certain demand for these images, and the efficacy of the proceedings was unquestioned. It may be that in many cases the wise woman knew something of the use of

poisons, which were very easily obtained in those days, and contrived to administer them to the victim. It has been said that this use for wax images exists to the present day. The wise woman had her clientele, for the most part, among the ignorant classes. If her fees were small, they were at least numerous, and sometimes a fine lady, having heard of the witch from her waiting-woman, would creep down to her duly shrouded and cloaked.

There were, however, impostors of a higher order, who charged much more. When Peregrine Pickle and his friend Cadwallader set up in the fortune-telling line, they charged half a guinea, and "the public naturally concluded that the author was no common fortune-teller." They had hired a room,

"in a house accommodated with a public staircase, so that people might have free ingress and egress, without being exposed to observation; and this tenement being furnished with the apparatus of a magician, such as globes, telescopes, a magic lantern, a skeleton, a dried monkey, together with the skins of an alligator, otter and snake."

These were the usual stock-in-trade of the necromancer, often reinforced by a plate of gilded shillings to suggest the generosity of opulent clients. Cadwallader, who took the part of the magician, was dressed in a black gown and fur cap, with a "thick beard white as snow, that reached to his middle, and upon each shoulder sat a prodigious large black cat, which had been tutored for the purpose." Peregrine and Cadwallader were the purest of impostors; but, among the crowds of charlatans, there were doubtless some who really possessed those occult powers of which we know so little.

Fortune-telling by the cards was as much practised in those days as in these. For some reason the Fridays during Lent were, with the exception of Good Friday, considered favourable for such divination. A favourite method was to take a pack of thirty-six cards, twelve being marked with the letters of the alphabet and twelve with numerals. The cards were shaken up in a bag, and clients were then invited to draw.

## THE EMPEROR OF QUACKS

The unmarked card denoted that its owner would not marry, numerals foretold ill-luck, and the letters of the alphabet happy wedded life.

We have said that the wise women were often learned in herbs and simples, the quacks, who batten upon the credulity of the times, did not trouble much about such common remedies. Something strange and sensational paid better in their line of business, or at any rate a nostrum with a high-sounding name. There was Duncan Campbell, who lived "in Exeter Court, over against the Savoy in the Strand." "Everyone," says the *Spectator*, "has heard of the famous conjurer, who according to the opinion of the vulgar has studied himself dumb."

Dumb he remained, and apparently deaf too, until the year 1726 when he published the following amazing pamphlet.

"The friendly demon or the generous apparition, being a true narrative of a miraculous cure, newly performed upon that famous dumb gentleman, Mr. Duncan Campbell, by a familiar spirit that appeared to him in a white surplice like a cathedral singing boy."

Campbell made a good thing out of selling, "Pulvis Miraculosus, and Egyptian lodestones," but whether either of them cured the deaf and dumb we are not told.

About the year 1780, "the Emperor of Quacks," James Graham, set up his *Templum Æsculapio Sacrum* in the Royal Terrace Adelphi. Here he lectured on magnetism, electricity and health, at two guineas a lecture, and told people, to the accompaniment of odes set to music, how they might live with health, honour and happiness in the world for at least a hundred years. Walpole stigmatised the whole thing as "the most impudent puppet show of imposition"; but there were people who paid Graham a thousand pounds to be supplied regularly with the Elixir of Life, which he said he had discovered. Another amazing production was his *Celestial Bed*. All married couples who slept in it, were assured that they would be rewarded with children of the most surpassing beauty; and a fee of £500 a night was charged

for its use. Graham also advocated what he termed "earth bathing," and he might have been found every day in company with a young woman, whom he called the Goddess of Youth and Health, both covered up to their chins in earth. The Doctor's hair was carefully dressed and powdered and the Goddess wore something very fashionable in the way of a headdress. For a while all went well, and Graham moved into larger quarters in Shomberg House, Pall Mall. Then fashion veered away from him; the Goddess of Youth and Health fell ill and died owing, it was said, to sleeping in damp sheets in the Celestial Bed. According to Southey, Graham became quite insane through taking ether, and would rush out into the street and give away all the clothes he was wearing, to the first passing beggar. A night in the Celestial Bed would, according to him, ensure beautiful offspring; there was a Mr. Lattese, from Piedmont, who promised something even better. He declared that, by a long course of experiment, he had "discovered the wonderful secret of procreating either sex at the joint option of the parents. Should they desire to have a daughter"—and few people in those days did—

"the success cannot be warranted with absolute certainty," "but should they concur in their wishes to have a son, they may rely that by strictly conforming to a few easy and natural directions they will positively have a boy. . . . Mr. Lattese thinks fit to premise that he will pay no attention but to letters post paid and signed with real names, directed to him at the Antigallican Coffee House by the Royal Exchange."

We do not hear that the male population of London was materially increased, indeed Mr. Lattese does not seem to have been as successful as some impostors. Perhaps he did not advertise enough. Graham hired two enormous men, and sent them out, in gorgeous liveries and gold-laced hats, and silver-headed staves. They paraded the streets and delivered his advertisements at houses as they passed. The mountebanks and quack doctors, who attended fairs or set

up their booths in the street, sent out their myrmidons to shout among the crowd and attract audiences.

"I have seen," says Steele, in the *Tatler*, "the whole front of a mountebank's stage, from one end to the other, faced with patents, certificates, medals, and great seals by which the several princes of Europe have testified their particular respect and esteem for the doctor."

And he also tells us of a Dr. Case, who put the following lines on the signpost at his door.

Within this place  
Lives Doctor Case.

"He is said," Steele continues, "to have got more by this distich than Dryden did by all his works."

Wide advertisement is absolutely essential for any kind of quackery. We have only to glance at our newspapers and magazines to be convinced of this. In them we shall probably find descriptions of nostrums to cure every kind of disease, but curing, perhaps, a mere dozen or so each. In the eighteenth century there were quacks who would cure everything, and even tell people, for a consideration, how to live for ever. There were more remedies, Addison thought, than there were diseases.

"I lately dropped into a coffee house at Westminster," he tells us, "where I found the room hung round with ornaments of this nature. There were elixirs, tinctures, the anodine fortis, English pills, electuaries. . . . Should you be attacked by the enemy sideways, here was an infallible piece of defensive armour to cure the pleurisy, should a distemper beat up your head-quarters, here you might purchase an impenetrable helmet, or, in the language of the artist, a cephalic tincture. If your main body be assaulted, here are various kinds of armour in case of various onsets. . . . One of these gentlemen, indeed, pretends to an effectual cure for leanness. What effects it may have on those who have try'd it, I cannot tell; but I am credibly informed that the call for it has been so great, that it has effectually cured the doctor himself of that distemper."

## SUPERSTITIONS AND QUACKERY

It is odd, we think, that anyone should offer to cure leanness. The opposite complaint and its remedies are widely advertised in our papers ; but leanness is considered to be an asset. It was not so in the eighteenth century ; the plump were generally admired.

Quacks were not patronised only by the ignorant. There was William Read, a jobbing tailor in Aberdeen, who, after travelling in Ireland and the north of England with his medicines, settled in York Buildings in the Strand. Queen Anne, who suffered from some chronic weakness in her eyes, actually made the ex-tailor her Oculist in Ordinary. He was knighted in 1705,

“ on account of his services to soldiers and seamen for blindness, which he gave gratis. He was a very comely person, and a man of fashion, rich and ostentatious. For thirty-five years he had been in the habit of couching cataracts, taking off all sorts of wens, curing wry necks and hare lips, vending styptick water and a variety of nostrums.”

Addison called him, “ the most laborious advertiser of his time.” And he was certainly lauded in verses, written by his own hacks from Grub Street.

Whilst Britain's sovereign scales such worth hath weighed  
And Anne herself her smiling favours payed  
That sacred hand does your fair chaplet twist  
Great Read her own entitled oculist.

Read does not seem to have taken pupils. He wished to keep his money in the family and he trained his wife to assist him. After his death the lady issued the following advertisement.

“ The Lady Read in Durham Yard in the Strand, having obtained a peculiar method of couching cataracts, and curing all diseases of the eyes, by Sir William Read's method of medicines, and having had above fifteen years' experience, and very great success in curing multitudes of blind and defective in their sight, particularly several who were born blind, she may be constantly advised with at her house as above, where the poor, her Majesty's seamen and soldiers

may meet with relief gratis. Note, Sir William Read has left only with his lady the true receipt of his styptick water, so famous for stopping all fluxes or effusions of blood, and all other of the medicines he frequently used in his practice, which may also be had at the place above mentioned.

"N.B. The Lady Read since the death of Sir William hath couched several persons, and one in particular, who was above sixty years of age, all with a very good success and brought them to perfect sight."

A number of women set up as practitioners in the eighteenth century, and they seemed to have had a fair measure of popularity. Many of them, no doubt, should be classed with the white witches and wise women whom we have mentioned; but there were others who had really gained some rule of thumb knowledge of medicine and surgery.

William Read, the jobbing tailor, was followed by Roger Grant, the tinker, who also became oculist to the Queen. He professed to cure those who were born blind, and there is an account in the *Tatler*, of how he operated successfully upon a young man, who had been blind from his birth. The tinker's detractors said that he hired a succession of poor persons to pretend to be blind. This imposture would seem to have been so clumsy, that, even in the eighteenth century, it must surely have been discovered. Probably Grant and Read both possessed some real knowledge and skill, which they set out with all the trappings of the charlatan and the mountebank. Besides treating the eyes, Grant also sold, at his residence, the Golden Ball, in Gravel Lane, Southwark,

"an astringent sear-cloth or plaster good for all sorts of sprains and wrenches. This cloth gives immediate ease to gout, and prevents it returning with so much violence as formerly, nay, if it be not inveterate gout, it presently cures it, and the price of the sear-cloth is from one shilling to half-a-crown, according to the largeness."

Yet another quack oculist called himself "the Chevalier John Taylor, Opthalmiator, Pontifical Imperial and Royal."

## SUPERSTITIONS AND QUACKERY

And claimed to have treated many crowned heads. He had an encounter with Dr. Johnson and was so rash as to propose talking Latin with the Great Cham. Johnson quoted Horace at him, which Taylor took to be the doctor's own remarks on the weather or what-not.

"The most ignorant man I ever knew, but spritely ; Ward the dullest," was Johnson's comment. This Ward, like all the other quacks, was an extensive advertiser. He contrived at length to push himself under royal patronage. George II being afflicted with a dislocated thumb, which his doctors had not been able to cure, sent for Ward. When he had examined the royal member, he gave it a sudden jerk and wrench, which sent it back into its place. The infuriated monarch swore and kicked ; but finding that he could now move his thumb without any pain, he took Ward into favour, gave him a carriage and pair, with a right to drive it through St. James's Park, and presented his nephew with a commission in the Guards. Ward, to the fury of qualified practitioners, acquired numerous patients, whom he dosed with his famous pills, made of dragon's blood and antimony, or his white drops, which were composed of ammoniated solution of mercury. Ward, like many other quacks, was good to the poor. He persuaded the King to give the use of a room in the Almonry at Whitehall, where he treated all the poor who visited him. Like Grant, Ward was accused of hiring people to pretend to be ill.

"A surgeon assures me," says one who had seen some of Ward's patients, "that these wretches, I have seen, were by way of decoy ducks, hired alternately to attend there and near the Horseguards twice a week, at half a crown a week, to pretend to be cured of such diseases as they were instructed to personify ; and that the better dressed people, who came in coaches and were shown occasionally as private patients, upstairs, were hired at a crown each, exclusive of the coach."

In spite of these strictures Ward received a vote of thanks from the House of Commons for cures wrought upon the King and the people at large. This, however, was nothing



compared with what Parliament did for Joanna Stephens. This lady announced that she had discovered a sovereign remedy for the stone, that common disease of the eighteenth century, and that she would part with the prescription for £5,000. The doctors were more than sceptical. There were many reports of cures; but whether these patients had ever really had the complaint was extremely doubtful. At length the Faculty suggested a test. There was a man, who the doctors were convinced suffered severely from the stone. He was given Mrs. Stephens's remedy and after a while, completely recovered. The doctors were nonplussed, the public rushed to subscribe to this benefactor of mankind, peers and bishops sent their guineas and the sum of thirteen hundred and fifty-six pounds was raised. This was very far short of the £5,000, which Joanna Stephens demanded, and she proceeded to use her influence with her many powerful friends. A parliamentary commission was set up, which actually declared that

"the said Joanna Stephens did . . . make a discovery to our satisfaction for the use of the public of the said medicines and of her method of preparing the same, and that we have examined the said medicines, and are convinced by experiment of the utility, efficacy and dissolving power thereof."

This report was signed by several noblemen, two bishops, and what is much more extraordinary, by two surgeons of great repute, Cæsar Hawkins and William Cheselden, who had invented the lateral operation for the stone. When the £5,000 were safely in her pocket, Joanna published the secret of her cure. In the *London Gazette* of June 19, 1739, there is the following notice:

"A full discovery of the medicines given by me, Joanna Stephens, and a particular account of my method of preparing and giving the same.

"The medicines are a powder, a decoction and pills. The powder consists of egg shells and snails both calcined. The decoction is made by boiling some herbs, together with a

ball which consists of soap, swine's cresses burnt to blackness and honey in water.

"The pills consist of snails calcined, wild carrot seeds, burdock seeds ashen keys, hip and haws all burnt to blackness, alicant soap and honey."

To the general public, this prescription might not have seemed anything out of the way ; indeed, the soap treatment was fashionable. Sir Robert Walpole had been swallowing soap for years, and when he died, it was computed that he had eaten one hundred and eighty pounds of it. As for snails, everyone knew what a valuable remedy they were in cases of consumption, and if in consumption, why not for the stone ? Qualified practitioners were, however, less complacent. They bided their time, and in course of years the man who had been recovered of the stone by Mrs. Stephens's medicines fell ill of some other disease and died. The doctors hastened to perform a post mortem, and then they discovered that the stone had made a little sac for itself, where it was so well secured that it had caused no more trouble.

Another woman quack was Mrs. Sarah Mapp, the bone-setter. She lived at Epsom, but used to drive up to London twice a week in her chariot and four, with footmen and outriders in splendid livery. The magnificence of this equipage, and the extremely repulsive appearance of Mrs. Mapp, led to a slight contretemps in the Old Kent Road. The crowd thought that she was ugly enough and splendid enough to be one of the King's unpopular German mistresses, and they began to shout opprobrious names and to pick up convenient stones.

"Damn your bloods !" cried the old lady, rising in her wrath and thrusting her head out of the window of her chariot. "Don't you know me, I'm Mrs. Mapp the bonesetter." With laughter and cheers the mob made way for her. She drove to the Grecian Coffee House, where she received her patients. She seems to have had real skill in the setting of limbs, and she cured many persons, including a niece of Sir

## A WOMAN QUACK

Hans Sloane. At a play at the theatre in Lincolns Inn Fields, where she was present, the following ballad was recited in her honour.

You surgeons of London, who puzzle your pates  
To ride in your coaches, and purchase estates.  
Give over for shame, for pride has a fall,  
And the doctress of Epsom has out-done you all.

In physic as well as in fashion we find  
The newest has always its run with mankind.  
Forgot is the bustle 'bout Taylor and Ward  
And Mapp's all the cry and her fame's on record.

Dame nature had given a doctor's degree,  
She gets all the patients and pockets the fee.  
So if you don't instantly prove her a cheat,  
She'll loll in her carriage while you walk the street.

Taylor, Ward and Mapp have the honour to surmount Hogarth's plate "The Undertaker's Arms." They look down, with some complacency, on the crown of quacks beneath them. Hogarth thus describes this coat of arms.

"The company of undertakers bareth sable an urinal proper, between twelve quack heads of the second, and twelve cane heads, or consultant. On a chief, nebulae, ermine, one complete doctor, issuant chekie, sustaining in his right hand a baton of the second. On the dexter and sinister sides, two demi-doctors issuant of the second and two cane heads issuant of the third; the first having one eye couchant towards the dexter side of the escutcheon; the second faced per pale proper, with gules ardent. With this motto *et plurima mortis imago* [The general image of Death]."

Hogarth might hold the quacks up to ridicule, and Lettsom vainly urged the College of Physicians to exercise their undoubted right to prevent anyone practising as a doctor within seven miles of the city unless he had first acquired a licence from that learned body. The crowd ran after the quacks, as they now run after patent medicines and unqualified practitioners. They would pay as much as a guinea a box for Dr. Belloste's pills for the stone. Dr. Anodyne charged five and

## SUPERSTITIONS AND QUACKERY

sixpence for his necklace, which enabled children "to cut their teeth with safety," and with the necklace he threw in an almanac, which told people how to make "sack wey and choke noxious vermin. One year," we are told, "he informs us gratis that all the woodcocks and cuckoos go annually to the moon."

The credulous public would even patronise foreign quacks, though it was generally known that nothing good ever came from the Continent. Society flocked to hear Dr. Mainandue, the pupil of Mesmer, who lectured on animal magnetism and its curative properties.

Then there were the Alsatians, Philip Louthembourg and his wife. When people came to them they "looked upon them with an eye of benignity, and cured them." This couple were not impostors. They really believed that they had the power to cure, and they charged nothing for their services. Unfortunately people were admitted by ticket, and the unscrupulous sold these to weary folk, who had been waiting at the door for hours. They charged as much as two or three guineas for them.

There is no doubt that many quacks believed firmly in their own remedies. Charlotte, the small daughter of Colley Cibber, set up medical practice at a very tender age. She obtained, from an apothecary's widow, living in Uxbridge, "a cargo of combustibles, sufficient to have set up a mountebank for a twelve month; but my stock," she says, "was soon exhausted, for the silly devils began to fancy themselves ill, because they knew they could have physic for nothing, such as it was. But O woeful day; the widow sent in her bill to my father; who was intirely ignorant of the curious expense I had put him to, which he directly paid with a strict order never to let Dr. Charlotte have any further credit, on pain of losing the money, so by me contracted."

Nothing daunted, Charlotte set to work to concoct other remedies, and a poor old woman coming to her, "with a violent complaint of rheumatic pains, and a terrible disorder in her stomach" was given a concoction of garden snails

and brown sugar, "to be taken a spoonful once in two hours" together with an ointment made of the remainder of the snails with mutton fat and green herbs.

"In about three days time," Charlotte tells us, "the good woman came hopping along to return thanks for the extream benefit she had received, in-treating my goodness to repeat the medicine as she had found such wonderful effects from their virtues."

Indeed, Charlotte's remedies were no worse than those advocated by many doctors.

In 1776 Guiseppe Balsamo, who called himself Count Alessandro Medina Cagliostro, set up a laboratory near Pall Mall. He dabbled in the occult and said that he could pick out the lucky numbers in lotteries. He made friends with Lord George Gordon and other and more disreputable persons. The latter swindled him out of a large sum of money and preferred a charge of witchcraft against him. He was acquitted; but finding London society less sympathetic than that of Paris, he spoke mournfully of going to live with the wild beasts of the jungle, where he was sure of finding friends, and departed for the French capital.

Katterfelto, we have mentioned in connection with "the insects which caused the late influenza." He travelled about the country in a caravan accompanied by large black cats; but in 1782 he came to London and put the following advertisement into the *Morning Post*.

"Mr. Katterfelto has, in his travels, had the honour to exhibit with great applause before the Empress of Russia, the Queen of Hungary, the Kings of Prussia, Sweden, Denmark and Poland; and since his arrival in London he has been honoured by some of the Royal Family, many foreign ministers and noblemen, and a great many ladies of the first rank. Wonders, wonders, wonders, wonders! are now to be seen by the help of the sun and his new invented solar microscope, and such wonderful and astonishing sights of creation was never seen before in this or any other kingdom and may never be seen again. The admittance to see these wonderful works of Providence is only—front seats three shillings—second

seats two shillings—back seats one shilling only. . . . The insects in the hedges will be seen larger than ever . . . and in a drop of water the size of a pin's head, there will be seen about fifty thousand insects, the same in beer, milk, vinegar, flour, blood, cheese, etc., and there will be seen many surprising insects in different vegetables and above two hundred other dead objects.

“N.B. After his evening lecture he will discover all the various arts on dice, cards, billiards and E.O. tables.”

The belief still lingered in London as in other places, that a piece of hot cross bun, which had been kept for some months or years, would effect a cure in cases of diarrhœa and dysentery. The bun was grated and mixed with water, milk or brandy, and so great was the belief in the efficacy of this cure that if it failed, nothing else was attempted for the patient. It was also a popular belief that the eating of buns on Good Friday would protect the house from fire throughout the year.

Fielding declared that only the vulgar were superstitious. His vulgar must have been a very large class, and would have included King George I. A soothsayer had informed that amiable monarch that he would not survive his unfortunate wife for more than a year. As the time drew near, he set out for Hanover, resolved to die in his beloved home. He took a tearful farewell of his family and friends, assuring them that they would never see him again alive.

Superstition is always with us, and the spread of education though it may curb, cannot wholly banish it from our midst.

## EDUCATION

As compared with the century which preceded, and that which followed it, the eighteenth century cannot be termed well educated. It had its scholars, no doubt, its Parrs, Bentleys and Porsons ; but the ordinary gentleman of upper class England could seldom compare with his Elizabethan prototype, and the mass of the people was sunk in a depth of ignorance, which was rare in the nineteenth century. It is difficult to account for the general deterioration in learning, which undoubtedly took place. Addison and Adam Smith blamed the schools, other writers spoke of the lax discipline of the home, moralists condemned the luxury and worldliness of the age. The rot had no doubt set in at the Universities. They had never quite recovered from the turmoil and brutality of the civil wars. Religion too, which had been the foster-mother of true learning, was now either entirely slothful or blind to the advantages of education.

London was in a better position in this respect than many other places. A large number of schools had been established in her midst. Westminster was one of the two public schools of England in the eighteenth century. Here and at Eton were educated most of those boys of the upper classes who were sent to school. A large number grew up at home under the care of tutors, their parents regarding public schools, and with some reason, as the hotbeds of vice and brutality.

"There Busby's awful picture decks the place," says an old Westminster, breaking out into verse in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, and the tradition of sound learning, which that much dreaded pedagogue had implanted in the school, was fostered, during the eighteenth century, by the headmaster, Dr. Vincent. He had entered the school at the early age of

seven. Boys on the foundation came to Westminster at that tender age, a year later than the age of entry at Eton.

"They sleep in the dormitory, have their dinner in the hall," we are told, "and may have other meals if they chuse, which from the inconvenience of the statutory hours, they seldom if ever claim. They are distinguished from the town boys, who are very numerous, by a gown, cap and college waistcoat, which are furnished by the college, but being of a coarse material, it is customary to clothe themselves with others of a better fabric, but in the same fashion."

The scholars' dormitory had been erected by the exertions of Bishop Atterbury, partly from a legacy from Sir Edward Hannes, Queen Anne's physician, and partly from money bestowed by King George I and the Prince of Wales. In this building the celebrated Westminster play was acted, which Garrick himself did not disdain to supervise. Every year, eight of the scholars were elected, after a contest among themselves in classical knowledge, as scholars of Christchurch or Trinity College, Cambridge. In the hall of the school where, according to Ackermann, the masters sit pouring out their tea by the light of a dozen candles, there is a fine glowing fire without any chimney in the middle of the room.<sup>1</sup> The great schoolroom looks bare and chill and gloomy. The cold of these big schools in winter must have been intense. When there were fires the big fellows monopolised them. No wonder schoolboys, who are not, under the best conditions much addicted to cleanliness, seldom washed. A pump in the court, on a bitter winter's morning, is not alluring as an aid to ablution. It was not only the cold at school which had to be faced. There were the long journeys home on horseback or by coach. Poor little Octavius Thackeray, coming home for the holidays from Charterhouse, was left by the school porter to wait for two hours in the yard of the George and Blue Boar at Holborn for the coach to Cambridge. He died from the effects of the cold and rain.

<sup>1</sup> Ackermann's plate is dated 1811, but the appearance of the hall would not have been altered.



## CHRIST'S HOSPITAL

Good Thomas Sutton's foundation of the Charterhouse still flourished. Here forty boys were fed and clothed and taught the classics besides writing and arithmetic. They played cricket on those green lawns under stately trees, some of which are still standing though much of the garden has been turned into classrooms and paved courts. At Charterhouse came Dick Steele to school and his friend Joseph Addison, John Wesley, Sir William Blackstone, Dr. Jortin and many another man distinguished in his day.

London was rich in these charitable foundations. There was Christ's Hospital, of which we know so much, thanks to Lamb and Coleridge, Christ's Hospital with that headmaster of redoubtable fame, the Rev. James Bowyer.

"I have known him," says Lamb, "double his knotty fist at a poor trembling child (the maternal milk hardly dry upon its lips) with a 'Sirrah, do you presume to set your wits at me.'"

Bowyer, with all his harshness, had a sound view of learning. He made the boys study Milton and Shakespeare, when English literature was unknown in most English schools. He disliked fine phrases, in an age when poetic imagery was admired. "Harp, Harp, Lyre? Pen and ink boy, you mean. Muse, boy, muse? Your nurse's daughter, you mean. Pierian spring? Oh, aye! the Cloister pump, I suppose."

Christ's Hospital, and a building at Hertford, were capable of holding over eleven hundred children. Of these only eighty were girls. The Grecians generally proceeded to Oxford or Cambridge and were expected to take Holy Orders. A mathematical school had been founded in the reign of Charles II, for boys who were going to sea, and ten of these lads were, each year, placed as apprentices in merchant ships. They went from a hard school to a rough and brutal life.

There were many regulations as to the admittance of children into Christ's Hospital. None was to be admitted who had

"any adequate means of being educated and maintained, or who are lame, crooked or deformed, so as not to be able to

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take care of themselves, or have any infectious distemper, as leprosy, scald head, itch, scab, evil or rupture."

The age of entry was between seven and ten years. In the great hall, which was built after the fire of London, with its pictures of royal patrons on the walls, the boys took their supper. A Grecian ascended a pulpit in the middle of the hall and read the second lesson for the day. This was followed by a prayer, a psalm and grace, and then the hungry children were allowed to eat whatever meagre fare might be provided. According to Coleridge,

"the diet was very scanty. Every morning a bit of dry bread and some bad small beer, every evening a larger piece of bread and cheese or butter which ever we liked. For dinner—on Sundays boiled beef and broth; Monday bread and butter and milk and water. Tuesday roast mutton; Wednesday bread and butter and rice milk; Thursday boiled beef and broth; Friday boiled mutton and broth, Saturday bread and butter and pease porridge. Our food was portioned and excepting on Wednesdays I never had a bellyful. Our appetites were damped not satisfied, and we had no vegetables."

Wooden trenchers and bowls were used and the beer was served in a leathern jack and poured into small piggins. The boys had a rhyme about the days of the week and their various unsatisfactory meals.

Sunday All Saints.  
Monday All Souls.  
Tuesday All trenchers.  
Wednesday All bowls.  
Thursday Tough Jack.  
Friday no better.  
Saturday pease soup with bread butter.

Visitors were admitted with orders from the governors on Sunday evenings during the winter. They could sit and watch the boys eat the meagre fare provided, and then return to a nice little supper of stuffed capon or pigs' fry in the parlour over the shop. In this great hall on St. Matthew's day, came the Lord Mayor, the Sheriffs, Aldermen, and Governors

## MERCHANT TAYLOR'S SCHOOL

to hear the Grecians orate in Latin and in English. It may be that the company did not always understand the full tenor of the oration ; but they put their hands in their pockets and dropped guineas and half-guineas into the large glove which was handed round. This money was given to those Grecians who might be proceeding to the University, to help them with their expenses.

The revenues of Christ's Hospital were considerable. They were derived from royal and other donations of houses and lands and from private subscriptions. The City had given the Governors the right to collect taxes upon two hundred and forty of the carts, which plied for hire within its boundaries. The tax amounted to 17s. 4d. on each cart and the Governors were also given the duty of  $\frac{3}{4}$ d. upon each piece of cloth exposed for sale in Blackwell Hall. It seems as if the school could have afforded something better than dry bread and bad small beer.

Nearly all the City companies had their schools—the Goldsmiths, the Haberdashers, the Skinners, the Fishmongers and the many others, which go to make up the livery companies of London. Of these Merchant Taylor's School is one of the most celebrated.

" Merchant Taylor's School," says Wilson, who was its master and historian—and he might have been writing of all the schools of the City companies, " does not indeed affect to enrol among her scholars many of the mighty or the noble. Her worthies have not been distinguished for hereditary rank, though in many instances the foundations of greatness have been laid within her walls."

Wilson, with the absurd snobbery of the later eighteenth century, protests that there were no tailors on the Court and very few in the livery of the company, which was probably true, as the companies had long ceased to be truly representative. The name, he protests, shall be spelt with a " Y " to differentiate the company and the school from " the men whose business it is to make clothes." The school was open to all boys of whatever trade or class their parents might be,

who could obtain the favour of the headmaster or a recommendation from the master or wardens of the company. They paid five pounds a year and gave the headmaster ten shillings each quarter, and twelve shillings for "breaking-up money." They were taught the classics and Hebrew and nothing more of any description. The Governors of the school might be tradesmen but they did not approve of a commercial education.

St. Paul's School, though it cannot be classed among the City company's schools, had always been under the protection of the Mercer's Company. There had been a school under the shadow of the great Cathedral from the earliest times. Colet had endowed it, and its income in the eighteenth century amounted to £6,000 a year. It was still a free school, the scholars paying a fee of a shilling upon entrance. Nominations were in the hands of the Mercer's Company, and like nearly all the City schools the education was entirely classical.

Besides these well-known schools, which we have mentioned, there were numbers of small private establishments in London and the suburbs. There were no doubt schools something like that which Foote mentioned in *The Author*, "the academy of Mr. Quae Genus at Edgeware," where a boy could "make acquaintance with my young Lord Knap, son of the Earl of Frieze" or "Doctor Ticklepatchers at Barnet" where he could "form a friendship with young Stocks the rich broker's only child."

Some people, who were poor, or for reasons of their own wished a boy out of the way, would send him to one of those cheap Yorkshire schools, which advertised in the manner of Mr. Wackford Squeers. Such advertisements were to be found in the newspapers and in the bar-parlours of some of the London inns—that of the Saracen's Head on Snow Hill, perhaps.

"At Knaton near Thirsk in Yorkshire," we read in the *Public Advertiser* of 1755, "by the Rev. Mr. Addison and proper assistants, young gentlemen are conveniently boarded, decently clothed, and regularly instructed in the English, Latin

and Greek languages, writing in all kinds, arithmetic and geometry, with their uses in all kinds of measuring, trigonometry, plain and spherical, applied to navigation, astronomy, etc. Algebra and book-keeping after the Italian method. They are furnished with books and other necessaries at £10 a year. For further satisfaction, apply to Joseph Garth Esquire, New North Street, Red Lion Square; Mr. Stapleton watch-maker near Carnaby Market. Mr. Addison intends to be in town the 14th inst. and may be treated with as usual at the Sussex Coffee House in Fleet Street every day from ten till twelve, and at Benn's Coffee House, New Bond Street, from two to four, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays."

What these schools were, Dickens has shown in *Nicholas Nickleby*, and we think that all such establishments have long since disappeared. It is disquieting to see boarding schools in these days, advertising that they will accept children at £40 a year or rather less. This is equivalent to the Rev. Mr. Addison's £10, and surely means starvation of body and mind. In the eighteenth century starvation seems to have been quite usual. The diet of Christ's Hospital was nothing out of the way, and other conditions may be imagined, when we read in Southey's *Life* of the school which he attended:

"There was a washing tub in the playground, with a long towel on a rail beside it. This tub was filled every morning for the boarders to perform their ablutions, all in the same water, and whoever wished to wash his hands or face in the course of the day, had no other. I was the only boy who had any repugnance to dip his hands in this pig trough. There was a large cask near, which received the rain water; but there was no getting at the water, for the top was covered, and to have taken out the spigot would have been a punishable offence. I, however, made a little hollow under the spigot to receive the dripping, just deep enough to wet the hands, and there I used to wash my hands with clean water when they required it."

Poor Southey, he apparently never washed any other part of his body, and at many schools it would have been equally impossible to do so. The dirt and brutality of eighteenth-

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century England were exemplified in the schools. Here and there a protest was heard. Addison and Fielding inveighed against the cruelty of schoolmasters. Careful parents kept their boys at home rather than let their minds be contaminated and their healths ruined.

"I have very often," says Addison, "with much sorrow bewailed the misfortune of the children of Great Britain, when I consider the ignorance and undiscerning of the generality of schoolmasters. The boasted liberty we talk of is but a mean reward for the long servitude, the many heartaches and terrors to which our childhood is exposed in going through a grammar school. Many of these stupid tyrants exercise their cruelty without any manner of distinction of the capacities of children. . . . I am confident that no boy who will not be allured to letters without blows, will ever be brought to anything with them."

Addison had extraordinarily enlightened ideas ; but unfortunately no one paid any attention to him. The cruel beating of helpless children continued down the century, and for young boys school was too often a place of misery and torment. The elders, who had suffered themselves, were in general utterly callous and brutalised, and wreaked their vengeance on the young and weak. It must, of course, be remembered, that the whole of life in the eighteenth century was apt to be "poor, nasty, brutish and short." School conditions which would now be considered quite horrible, were regarded as perfectly normal. Goldsmith opines that there may be some schools where, "the masters and ushers are men of learning, reputation and assiduity"; but he does not seem to think that they were numerous. He points out that schoolmasters were generally wretchedly paid and very much looked down upon. The salaries of undermasters were often less than £20 a year, the hours were very long, and according to advertisements all teachers in the schools must "be able to bear confinement." Little could be done, Goldsmith thought, until the status and emoluments of the usher had been very greatly improved.

## THE GRAND TOUR

When a boy finally left school, it was often found that he knew very little indeed. He had, perhaps, some knowledge of the Latin classics, he could read the Greek Testament and had looked into Homer. He knew enough for the University; indeed if he had known nothing at all, he could have got in there. According to Adam Smith he was completely ignorant, "of everything which is the common subject of conversation among gentlemen and men of the world."

To remedy this deplorable state of affairs, it was customary among people of wealth to send their sons on the grand tour.

"Nothing," said Addison, "is more frequent than to take a lad from the grammar and taw and under the tuition of some poor scholar, who is willing to be banished for £30 a year and a little victuals, send him crying and snivelling into foreign countries. Thus he spends his time as children do at puppet shows, and with much the same advantage in staring and gaping at an amazing variety of strange things, strange indeed to one, who is not prepared to comprehend the reasons and meaning of them; whilst he should be laying the solid foundations of knowledge in his mind, and furnishing it with just rules to direct his future progress in life, under some skillful master in the art of instruction."

When a boy was so young and uninformed, the grand tour could be nothing but a useless and often a dangerous waste of time; but an older and more experienced lad, under the guidance of a good tutor, often derived great benefit and instruction from it.

If the school education of boys was often indifferent, that of girls was almost always bad. There were a few establishments where the rudiments of good teaching could be found. The More sisters kept an excellent school at Bristol, though even there they found it necessary to teach the governesses how to read and spell. The Misses Stephenson, who taught for the love of teaching, for they were beautiful women of good family, admitted that their girls adored dancing and loved dress and amusement and that it was very difficult to teach them anything. These ladies kept a school in Queen's

Square, a large establishment of over two hundred girls. Their lowest fee was £100 a year. The poor children only went home once in a twelvemonth, and then returned according to their teachers with "harmful and misguided notions." Even if the mistress of the school could teach, she might have other and undesirable qualities. "Perdita" Robinson tells us of her school teacher who,

"was mistress of the Latin, French and Italian languages. She was said to be a perfect arithmetician and astronomer, and possessed the art of painting on silk to a degree of exquisite perfection. But alas! with all these advantages, she was addicted to one vice, which at all times so completely absorbed her faculties, as to deprive her of every power either mental or corporeal."

In plain English she took to drink.

There were, of course, some really learned women. Elizabeth Elstob was a great Anglo-Saxon scholar. Mary Astell was a student of Locke and Descartes. She urged women to study philosophy. "Why," she asks, "shall it not be thought as genteel to understand French philosophy, as to be accoutred in a French mode?" She had published, *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies for the Advancement of their True and Greatest Interest*. In this book she advocated the founding of a college for women, to which young girls of good family might be sent, and where older unmarried women could find a pleasant refuge from a cold world. She was offered the sum of £10,000 by a lady whose name is not mentioned, but who was, it is generally supposed, Queen Anne herself. Unfortunately that meddlesome prelate, Bishop Burnett, intervened. He thought that a college for women would be ruled by the Scarlet Woman, and that it could be nothing less than a nunnery in disguise. The whole excellent scheme, which was the hope of its creator's life, fell into abeyance, and it was not till more than a century and a half had elapsed that another Queen gave her patronage to the first college for women in England, Queen's College, London.

It is probable that most of the cultivated women of the



century, and their numbers were not inconsiderable, had been educated at home. There were fathers and brothers, who were unwilling that their female relatives should be wholly ignorant, and an intelligent girl often learnt far more from the conversation at the dinner table and from her parent's library, than she could ever have acquired at any school. The list of learned, clever and interesting women gives the lie to the assertion that female education in the eighteenth century was always of the most wretched description. Besides Elizabeth Elstob and Mary Astell, there was Mrs. Carter who translated Epictetus, Mrs. Montagu, Mrs. Chapone, Fanny Burney, Sarah Fielding, Mary Wollstonecraft, Mrs. Vesey, Maria Edgeworth, and many others. According to Steele, women were "shining into politicians, virtuosas, free thinkers and disputants." Steele mingled in cultivated society, and it has never been gainsayed that women can talk. Poor Emilia, who was a celebrated wit in London, was called a tongue-pad in the country.

Steele and his friend Addison, who of all writers in the eighteenth century had the welfare of women most at heart, were constantly inveighing against the poorness and artificiality of their education.

"When a girl," says Steele, "is safely brought from her nurse, before she is capable of one simple notion of anything in life, she is delivered to the hands of her dancing master, and with collar round her neck, the pretty wild thing is taught a fantastical gravity of behaviour, and forced to a particular way of holding her head, heaving her breast, and moving with her whole body, and all this under pain of never having an husband if she steps, moves, or looks awry."

The following extract from the *Lounger* of 1786, though doubtless exaggerated, shows us that this pernicious system of education was still being followed.

"When I meet a gentleman in our walks," says the boarding school miss, "I must look as full at him as I can to show my eyes, and laugh to show my teeth . . . and though in a room, I am taught to speak low and mumbling as I can, to look as if

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I did not care whether I was heard or not, yet in a public place I am to talk as loud and as fast as possible, and call the men by their plain surnames, and talk about our last night's party."

Nearly all the sermonisers, the moralists, and even the novelists, blamed the homes for the faults and follies of youth. According to these writers, all parents were good-natured, easy-going people, who let their offspring get entirely out of hand. Richard Cumberland laments "that laxity of discipline, which renders so many houses terrible to the visitor."

Swift describes an aristocratic mother as impressing on her son's tutor that

"Master must not walk till he is hot, nor be suffered to play with other boys, nor be wet in his feet, nor daub his cloaths . . . that the child be not kept too long poring on his book, because he is subject to sore eyes and of a weakly constitution. By these methods," Swift tells us, "the young gentleman is in every article as fully accomplished at eight years old as at eight and twenty."

To the present-day critic and even to contemporary foreigners, the English parent did not seem to err on the side of laxity and good nature. Harshness, brutality and constant punishment were the characteristics of too many homes.

As the century progressed there is no doubt that women's education improved. To keep a governess was considered genteel, and many tradesmen's families employed them. What the life often was, to which these poor young women looked forward, we may gather from the pages of Emma. There must have been many households, however, in which they were treated with respect and friendship. The well-brought-up girls in Miss Edgworth's moral tale, *Mademoiselle Panache*, are horrified when the governess is treated with a lack of consideration and respect.

We have hitherto been considering the education of the upper and middle classes. Thanks to the many free schools in London, some of the poorer people had quite a sound

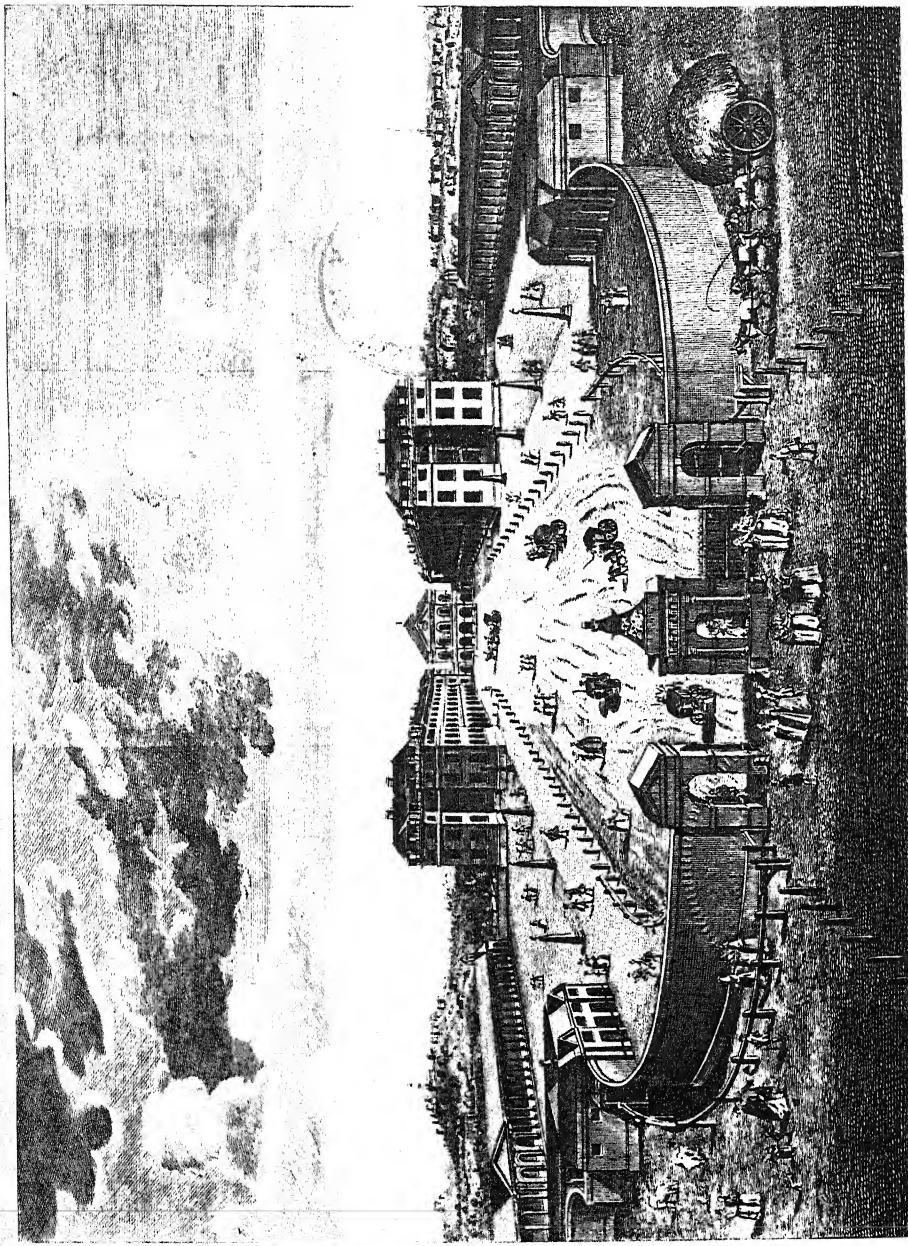
## THE CHARITY SCHOOLS

education. Pastor Moritz was surprised when he found a tailor's widow who read Milton. He would have been still more astonished if he had met Henry Wild, who had been professor of Oriental languages at Oxford and who began life as a tailor's apprentice. Amid a welter of ignorance, such examples stand out, and there were many scholars whose attainments would have been extraordinary in any age. There were precocious children who, like Dr. Malkin's little son, "commenced their career at three, became expert linguists at four, profound philosophers at five, read the Father's at six and die of old age at seven."

Among the very poor any sort of book education was rare, there were few who could read, and still fewer who could write. In all parts of London, but especially near the river in Shadwell or Wapping, cards might have been seen in shop windows or on stalls in the streets, advertising that letters would be written there to all parts of the world. Perhaps one of the most heartbreaking consequences of a sentence of transportation, was the fact that so often the prisoner's family heard from him no more. He was as much cut off from his relatives as if he had been dead. The woeful ignorance of the poor aroused the consciences of religious people. In 1698 Dr. Bray and a little company of friends started the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. Schools which taught religion, and at least reading and needlework, were an obvious need. An appeal was made for subscriptions and within six years fifty-four charity schools had been built in London and thirty-four in the country. By 1740 there were nearly two thousand of these schools in England. It was an effort of which the eighteenth century might well have been proud. Unfortunately the demand for child labour was insistent, and children were apt to be snatched away from school at the age of six or seven. In some of these establishments, the children were fed and clothed and taught a trade. The result might have been, and sometimes was, excellent; but the eighteenth century had a passion for farming out its institutions. It farmed its gaols, its roads and its workhouses, and it proceeded to

farm the charity schools. The masters and mistresses retained all the proceeds of the children's labour after they had fed and clothed them. We hear of horrible cases in which children were worked from five in the morning till nine at night with very little time for the scanty meals which were provided.

One of the best known of the London Charity Schools was the Foundling Hospital, and this was, on the whole, most excellently managed. It was established in 1739, by the exertions of Captain Thomas Coram of the Merchant Service. In those days it was a common sight to see some unwanted babe, laid upon a doorstep or left deserted by the wayside. The old fairy story, in which the poor parents deliberately lose their children in a wood, might have been founded on eighteenth-century facts. When a child was left abandoned in a London parish, it was sent by the guardians to the workhouse, and it was usually given the name of the parish in which it was found. There were unfortunate children, who were saddled with such names, as Tuesday Marrowbone (St. Marylebone) or Friday Cripplegate. There was one wretched boy, who was found on an ash heap and was christened, Job e Cinere Extractus. He did not survive. Many of these deserted children died of starvation or exposure, and at the best the tender mercies of the poor law were very hard. Thomas Coram raised a subscription and the beautiful Foundling Hospital was built. The two children to be first admitted were given the names of Thomas and Eunice Coram, and afterwards, as the boys were often destined for the sea, they were given such fine names as Blake, Hawkins and Drake. There was some opposition to Coram's beneficent scheme. It was said to encourage vice, as many of the poor children were illegitimate, and it was suggested that the foundlings of London would certainly increase in number. This was found to be true. Carriers and others drove quite a brisk trade in bringing up unwanted infants from the country, and depositing them at the gates of the Foundling. The Hospital authorities announced that no more children would be taken in in this way, and that henceforth the inmates would be the offspring



*The Founding Hospital*



of unmarried mothers, who had previously borne good characters.

In 1780 the Sunday school movement received a great impetus from the example and influence of Robert Raikes, who established a Sunday school at Gloucester. Thousands of such schools were set up all over England, and a large number in the Metropolis. Raikes was not, however, the first founder. The Rev. Theophilus Lindsay had had a Sunday school at Catterick in 1763, and a Wesleyan, Hannah Ball, had started another in 1769 at High Wycombe. Roland Hill, who in 1783 founded the Surrey Chapel Sunday school, which still exists, also established about twelve others, and the Southwark Sunday School Society was very active. There had always been catechising in the churches, but the Sunday school found itself obliged to give secular instruction as well. Most of their scholars had had no sort of education, and it was necessary to teach them, at least, to read the Bible. The effect of these schools on the manners and morals of the poor and ignorant was enormous. "No plan," said Adam Smith, "has promised to effect a change of manners, with equal ease and simplicity, since the days of the Apostles."

Besides its religious and moral value these schools often laid the seeds of an education, which was to blossom out into fine scholarship. Lackington, whose father was a journeyman's shoemaker, and who became a London bookseller with an income of £4,000 a year, declared that the Sunday school movement stimulated the sale of books enormously. Instead of sitting over the fire, telling stories of ghosts and goblins, poor people bought battered copies of Tom Jones, and Roderick Random, and there were stalls in the streets, where odd volumes of Shakespeare could be picked up for 1*d.* or even ½*d.* Lackington had not learnt to read until he was twenty-three. He starved himself on bread and tea, in order to get books. When his wife sent him to market with half a crown to buy a Christmas dinner, he expended the whole sum on Young's *Night Thoughts*. Mrs. Lackington remonstrated; but her husband informed her that if they should live for

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fifty years, they would still have Young's *Night Thoughts* to feast upon. His attitude was typical of a zeal for education which was occasionally to be found even in the eighteenth century.



## RELIGION

“THERE is less appearance of religion in England than in any neighbouring state or kingdom,” said Addison, writing early in the century. It is a sweeping statement and one might feel it was founded on insufficient knowledge, but it is borne out by Montesquieu, who said after a sojourn in this country in 1736, “Je passe en France pour avoir peu de religion, en Angleterre pour en avoir trop.”

Religion is not, however, shouted upon the housetops and it may be that the Frenchman did not know where to seek it. In Queen Anne's reign, at any rate, there was much religious activity. The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel had been founded in King William's reign and they were extremely active. Various other societies were instituted for the reform of morals, the remedying of abuses, and the leading of a godly life. Charity Schools were set up all over the kingdom.

Queen Anne bestowed upon the clergy the first fruits and tenths which had been appropriated by Henry VIII at the reformation, and these amounted to £17,000 a year. It was not a large sum even in those days, but it brought some relief to the poorer of the clergy. Queen Anne was a sincerely good woman and had the interests of the Church very much at heart. When she died in 1714 religion began to decline, and finally sank into that slough of apathy from which Wesley and his devoted followers set out to rescue it.

Many reasons have been adduced for this unhappy change. It is said to have been a reaction from the strictness of a Puritan regime, which had come to an end some fifty or sixty years before. At the present time we are told that the irreligious

state of England is a protest against the strictness of Victorian times which many people cannot even remember. The theory of reactions and the swinging of pendulums can surely be overdone.

There were other reasons for the decay of religion in the eighteenth century. The non-jurors had left the Church, and with the departure of these learned and pious men, there was an immense loss of zeal and fine scholarship. They were replaced only too often by men whose politics made them esteemed by the Government and this was particularly the case with the bishops.

"No man," said Dr. Johnson, that staunch defender of the Establishment, "can now be made a bishop for his learning and piety; his only chance of promotion is his being connected with someone who has parliamentary interest."

Convocation was suppressed in 1717. The good work which it had done in building and endowing new churches and charity schools was forgotten, and an unseemly dispute between the upper and lower houses led the Government to prorogue it *sine die*. The effect was unfortunate. The Church had now no rallying-point, no meeting-place where matters of importance could be discussed. The clergyman was left to his own devices and very often he sank into sloth and apathy.

Another reason for the decay of religious zeal was the extreme poverty of many of the clergy. Queen Anne's Bounty had certainly done some good and kept the wolf from many clerical doors, but the purchasing power of money was diminishing and an income which might have been just sufficient in the age of Anne was miserably inadequate fifty years later. When Lord Shelburne enquired of Watson, Bishop of Llandaff, "if nothing could be gotten from the Church towards alleviating the burdens of the State," the Bishop explained that if the whole revenues of the Church were divided up, including the stipends of bishops and deans, there would be only £150 for each clergyman. Any diminution of the sum would be inexpedient unless the Government

should wish to have "a beggarly and illiterate clergy." Beggarly and illiterate some of them already were, though the worst instances of poverty and ignorance were to be found in the country. Stackhouse, who wrote upon "The Miseries and Hardships of the Inferior Clergy" in 1743, sums up the matter thus :

"Any common footman, with £7 yearly and seven shillings a week board wages, with a good livery, his master's cast off clothes, and now and then some accidental vails and private advantages, is in a more prosperous and thriving condition of life than the highest stipendiary curate among us."

Twenty or thirty pounds a year were very usual salaries for curates, and incumbents had often little more. The remedy which was suggested for clerical poverty, which, by the way, is the favourite panacea nowadays, was pluralism. It was, and is, a miserable remedy, but in the eighteenth century the greatest pluralists were not poor men who were trying to eke out two miserable stipends ; but the rich and great who seldom came near their parishes and left all their work to underpaid curates. When Bishop Newton, the learned editor of *Milton*, was presented with the Deanery of St. Paul's in addition to the see of Bristol, he relinquished the city living which he had held for twenty-five years. He spoke of it with regret, and seemed to think he had been needlessly scrupulous. He had also, he said, when he was presented with the see of Bristol, given up the prebend of Westminster, a precentorship at York, and the post of lecturer at St. George's, Hanover Square. He urged his friend, Bishop Pearce of Rochester, the prelate who had corresponded with Horace Walpole about the monument in the Abbey, on no account to resign the Deanery of Westminster. It had always been held by the Bishop of Rochester, Newton urged, and the two preferments "lay so convenient to each other"—only about thirty miles apart—"that neither of them would be the same value without the other ; and if once separated they might perhaps never be united again, and his successors would have reason to reproach and condemn his memory."

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Watson, Bishop of Llandaff, finding no episcopal residence there, removed himself into Westmoreland where he made a very good thing out of agriculture.

“The provision,” he says, “of £2,000 a year which I possess from the Church, arises from the tithes of two churches in Shropshire, two in Leicestershire, two in my diocese, three in Huntingdonshire, on all of which I have resident curates.”

It was an extreme example of pluralism, and in London, where the livings were generally worth more than in the country, there were not so many absentee incumbents. In the metropolis indeed there was a strong Church life. It may not always have manifested itself in a Christian spirit. The Bangorian controversy, the heated disputes with Deists and Socinians, the mobs which shouted for Dr. Sacheverell, or pelted Jews and burned Catholic chapels, were the fruits of bigotry and ignorance; but they did not imply apathy. There were, however, other and better signs of a religious spirit. In the first place the stipends of the clergy were higher in London than in the country districts. True St. Mary Somerset with St. Mary Mounthaw was a living worth ten guineas a year, and St. James's Clerkenwell Green only £4 19s. 10d. St. James's Duke's Place had £13 a year “with perquisites,” whatever they may have been. Nearly all livings, however, were of £100 or more. St. Giles's Cripple-gate had a stipend of £450, St. Dunstan's Stepney £500, St. Clement Danes £600, St. Martin's in the Fields £600, St. Botolph's Aldgate £700. In addition to the stipend a good and comfortable house was usually provided for the incumbent, and there were valuable fees.

The patrons of the livings were usually the Bishop, the Dean and Chapters of London and Westminster, and the City Companies. There may have been some cases of nepotism, but in London the Churches had not become the dumping-ground for illiterate younger sons, and relatives who were too hopeless to be planted out in any other profession. Advow-

sons were not sold with the unblushing frequency that was customary in the country. The more educated and energetic, though not always, it must be owned, the most spiritually minded, of the clergy flocked to London.

When we turn to the matter of church services we find a great contrast with the country at large. There the clergy had to be urged by their bishops to hold two services on Sunday and if possible to have a celebration of Holy Communion between Whitsuntide and Christmas. Out of 111 London churches we find that 44 had daily services. Some had two or three, and St. James's Piccadilly had four services each day. Many churches had special sermons during the week, some of which had been endowed under old bequests. The Holy Communion was celebrated every Sunday in some churches. It was usually at twelve o'clock, though St. Lawrence at Guildhall and St. Martin's in the Fields had it at 6 a.m. At all other London churches it was celebrated on the first Sunday in the month. There were besides morning and afternoon services in all churches, and those which did not have daily prayer, generally had services on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saints' days. It is not to be supposed that in those days long before the Anglo-Catholic revival clergymen would have held services if no one ever came to them. As a matter of fact there was a great deal of Church-going. Law in his *Serious Call* makes the worldly Flavia go constantly to Divine Service, and we hear of there being six thousand worshippers at Portland Chapel. The enormous galleries of eighteenth-century churches were created to accommodate large congregations. "In the larger parishes," we read, "the press is so great and the pew-keeper's tax so exorbitant that those who love to save trouble either stay at home or retire to the conventicles." It must be confessed that the figures we have taken were for the year 1733, and there is evidence that towards the end of the century church-going had often declined and daily services had become less numerous.

Behaviour in church often left much to be desired. Many

persons came to church as a social function. We read in the *Tatler* that

“Lady Autumn made me a very low courtesey the other day from the next pew and with the most courtly air imaginable called herself ‘miserable sinner.’ Her niece, soon after, in saying ‘Forgive us our trespasses’ courtesy’d with a gloating look at my brother. He returned it by opening his snuff-box, and repeating a yet more solemn expression.”

The old Puritan custom of standing during prayers still persisted in some churches, and there were even people who sat down during the Creed, which was no doubt a relic of Puritan practice. Sitting during the psalms was quite usual, indeed in some churches, what Cowper calls “the divorce of knees from hassocks” was usual during the whole service. Holy Communion was held, as we have said, far more frequently in London than in the country, and early in the century, at least, there were many communicants. We must always remember, however, that some attended because they were obliged. Under the Test and Corporation Acts, which were not repealed till the following century, a man who held any post under the Government or the City was obliged to be a communicating member of the Church of England.

Many people came to church to hear the organ, though not all churches by any means possessed one; and they would leave hurriedly if there were a collection. Other people came for the sermon. There was very good preaching in many London churches, though the sermons were apt to be very long. The Lord Mayor, who had been listening to Dr. Parr’s Spital Sermon, told the preacher that there were four things in it that he did not like to hear, and these were the quarters of the church clock, which had struck four times during the discourse. An hour, however, was nothing for Dr. Parr. It was said that he once preached for three. Still, sermons were undoubtedly popular. Stern said that he had made £300 by a volume of sermons, which was more than double what he had got for *Tristram Shandy*; and 30,000 copies of Woolston’s book on *Miracles* were sold. “The

Bishop of Chichester's sermons," Hannah Moore tells us, "were out of print in eight days. I hope," she adds, "the age is not so bad as we took it to be."

The country had certainly spent large sums on church building. The fifty City churches which had been rebuilt after the fire, had cost £263,786. Many of these had not been finished till early in the eighteenth century. Then there was the problem of all the new districts which were growing up in the West. They needed churches and clergymen. Addison makes Sir Roger de Coverley observe,

"how thick the City was set with churches, and that there was scarce a single steeple on this side Temple Bar. A most heathenish sight," said Sir Roger. "There is no religion at that end of the town. The fifty new churches will very much mend the prospect, but church work is slow, church work is slow."

Church work was certainly slow; but the churches were built at last, and Parliament voted £350,000 for their erection. They were inferior to Wren's masterpieces in the City, though they were usually fine, dignified buildings. The Palladian style was everywhere admired, and Gothic architecture was considered barbarous. Even Wren, who did not disdain to copy the Gothic in one or two instances, says of the cathedrals of the Middle Ages, that they were "vast and gigantic buildings indeed, but not worthy of the name of architecture." Stanley, in his *Memorials of Westminster Abbey*, speaking of Bishop Atterbury says, "There is a charming tradition that he stood by, complacently watching the workmen as they hewed smooth the fine old sculptures over Solomon's porch."

This contempt for the beauties of another age continued till the end of the century. Then a Gothic reaction set in, which lasted a long time and is responsible for some of the most dreadful buildings, which the mind of the architect has ever conceived. At the present day churches vary very much in their interior, and often reflect the tenets of their incumbent in a very marked degree. In the eighteenth century though there were High Churchmen, Low Churchmen, Broad Church-

men, and even some Deists and Socinians within the establishment, churches were of a very uniform appearance. It is true that some buildings might be in a bad state of repair, others were dirty, mouldy and very badly kept, but on entering a church it would have been hardly possible to guess what kind of doctrine might be preached there on a Sunday. If the church were tolerably clean and in good repair the congregation congratulated itself. Dean Swift complained of having to officiate in "a church without pews," but that was in the country. In London, certainly, all churches in the eighteenth century were pewed. To quote the Dean again.

A bedstead of the antique mode  
 Compact of timber many a load  
 Such as our ancestors did use  
 Was metamorphis'd into pews  
 Which still their ancient nature keep  
 By lodging folks disposed to sleep.

Some of these pews were furnished with chairs and tables, and had fireplaces in them, but this was not common in London. All the better ones were rented to members of the congregation, and the poor were relegated to comfortless seats at the back of the church, where they could see or hear very little. As the pews were very high, it was necessary to have an immense three-decker pulpit towering up above them. Here in the highest division the clergyman preached, with an occasional glance at the hour-glass beside him. He read the service from the next tier, and at the bottom sat the clerk, leading the psalms and making the responses, which the congregation were often too idle or ignorant to make for themselves.

The pulpit could be very finely carved, and it was sometimes the only thing of any beauty in the church. A few of the London churches had good altar-pieces, but for the most part the communion table stood under the ten commandments, closely hemmed in by railings. Dr. Welton, the rector of Whitechapel, put up a painted reredos of the Last Supper; but as he had inserted a portrait of his clerical enemy, the



Bishop of Peterborough, and portrayed him as Judas Iscariot, a scandalised diocesan had it hastily removed.

The walls of most churches were covered with layers of whitewash, which has no doubt preserved for a more appreciative age many ancient beauties. By the end of the century a few of the richer and more fashionable churches had introduced stoves, but in the early days there was no form of heating except very occasionally a fireplace in some rich man's pew. With an idea of making the building less cold, rushes, hay or straw were generally strewn upon the stone floors. They were changed four times a year, at Christmas, Easter, Whitsun, and for the feast of dedication. Straw was reserved for the winter months, and rushes were strewn in the spring. No one seemed to object to this litter, though the fastidious suggested it should be removed rather more frequently.

Any sort of church adornment, indeed the most ordinary amenities, were condemned as popish. When Sir Joshua Reynolds and a company of artists offered to paint sacred pictures for St. Paul's, there was a horrified protest. "While I live and have power," Bishop Terrick of London declared, "I will never suffer the doors of the metropolitan church to be opened for the introduction of popery into it."

The fact was that anything which a man happened to dislike, anything of colour or beauty, and, above all, anything which was likely to cost much money, was condemned as popish. The clergy wasted a great deal of time which should have been spent in parish work in condemning the Catholics, or reproaching the Deists and the Methodists. As a rule, the London incumbent was not a bad man. He did his duty according to his lights. He had his two services on Sunday and perhaps every day as well. He was careful about his sermons. He visited the sick if they sent for him. What he did not do was to go out into the highways and hedges and compel men to come in. The very poor scarcely ever entered the Established Church. They were ragged, dirty, verminous, evil smelling. Church-goers in their Sunday best would have looked at them askance, beadles might have thrust them out.

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Only Wesley and his devoted band welcomed them wholeheartedly, and sought like their Master for congregations among the poor and outcast.

We have been speaking of the average clergyman. There were a few men whose missionary zeal stands out in fine contrast to what Gibbon called "the fat slumbers of the Church." There was John Newton, who might have had a rich congregation at St. Mary's Woolnoth's and who was never better pleased than when he saw it filled with the poor. If such men were rare the very worldly parson was happily not numerous. There were such men, of course. Cowper has described him for us in verse.

Loose in morals and in manners vain  
In conversation frivolous, in dress  
Extreme. At once rapacious and profuse  
Frequent in park with lady at his side  
Ambling and prattling scandal as he goes.  
But rare at home and never at his books  
Or with his pen, but when he scrawls a card.

Constant at routs, familiar with a round  
Of ladyships—a stranger to the poor,  
Ambitious of preferment for its gold  
And well prepared by ignorance and sloth  
By infidelity and love of world  
To make God's work a sinecure, a slave  
To his own pleasures and his patron's pride.

In the early years of the century, the clergyman generally wore his gown, even when he walked the streets of London. If he were a university man and a high churchman he wore the M.A. gown, if a low churchman or one who had not been at Oxford or Cambridge, he wore what was known as "a pudding sleeve gown." All clerical dignitaries wore a scarf, and many a country parson brought one to London so that he might be mistaken for a doctor of divinity. There were a few men, even early in the century, who did not wear clerical garb. Swift tells Stella how he had "a light camlet faced with red velvet and silver buckles," and towards the end of the century there were many parsons who dressed as laymen.

## SUNDAY OBSERVANCE

The surplice was generally worn in church though not in the pulpit, but there were many low churchmen who objected to it and called it a "Babylonish garment" or a "habit of the priest of Isis."

In the early days of the century Sunday was very strictly observed. All the shops were closed, and nearly everyone went to church, public vehicles did not run, and it was difficult to hire either coach or chaise. This Puritan Sabbath did not last long. As early as 1759 the Queen was holding drawing-rooms on Sunday, and a few years later George III wrote a sharp letter of rebuke to the Archbishop of Canterbury for giving Sunday parties. By the end of the century the day among the upper classes and the poor was often devoted to amusement. Many shops were open in spite of the Lord's Day Observance Act and vehicles could be hired, though a double fare was generally charged for breaking the Sabbath. When Lackington first came to London he was horrified to find "so many walking, and riding for pleasure, getting drunk, quarrelling, fighting, working, buying, selling, etc.," and Eden suggested that games should be encouraged on Sunday to counteract the general orgy of drunkenness and dissipation among the lower orders. On the other hand, the Nonconformists and perhaps we may say the middle classes generally still observed the Lord's Day with great strictness. De La Rochefoucauld, who visited London in the last years of the century, comments bitterly upon the dullness of Sunday, which, he said, was entirely given up to church services, sleep, and Bible reading.

The upper classes, according to Hannah More, had almost discarded religion.

"There is," she says, "but little appearance remaining among the great and the powerful of that righteousness, which exalteth a nation . . . our religion has decreased in a pretty exact proportion to our having secured the means of enjoying it."

Sir Joshua Reynolds told her that he was "exceedingly

mortified " when he showed his picture of the infant Samuel " to some of the great " and they enquired who Samuel was. Hannah could only reply that she hoped the poets and painters would bring the Bible into fashion again. It was, she says, " the most unfashionable of books."

Lent was still observed with some strictness, though here again, as the century advanced, customs became more lax. For many years church people wore mourning during the forty days, and the clergy gave up their hair powder.

"Everybody is in mourning at court," says Lady Fermanagh, writing to Ralph Verney in 1704. " It being Lent, most other people are so too." Plays, balls, and *ridottos* were generally avoided during Lent by strict church people, and meat was given up. Mrs. Glass has a long chapter consisting of dishes for " a fast dinner " and very rich and expensive some of them are. There were a number of special sermons preached in London on Wednesdays and Fridays during Lent and they seem to have been generally well attended.

Excommunication and penance had largely died out in the eighteenth century. Here and there in the country a penitent in a white sheet with bare feet and carrying a rod might have been seen in the church porch, doing penance for some sin, usually incontinence. In London, however, the sight was almost unknown, though there is one recorded instance as late as the year 1790. A certain John Ride had married within the prohibited degree, and he and his wife were sentenced by the Court of Arches to do penance in the prescribed manner. Usually, however, in London, penance, if it were inflicted at all, was commuted by a fine. Convocation in the early years of Anne's reign had declared against that practice, which they thought savoured of the sale of indulgences, but the authority of convocation was to be short lived.

We have spoken hitherto of religion as it was practised in the Church of England, but it must be remembered that there were religious bodies outside the Church, who in spite of civil and political disabilities carried on a vigorous spiritual life. John Wesley, of course, would never admit that he had

left the Church of England, and whatever his followers might say or do, he lived and died a devoted son of the Church into which he had been baptised. It is impossible to overestimate the good which was done by John Wesley and his brother Charles. They and George Whitefield and hundreds of other devoted men and women carried the Gospel all over the British Isles and far beyond them. The effects of their teaching may be seen to-day not only in the great Church which bears Wesley's name, but in almost every Christian organisation. Like his Master before him, he came to preach to the poor and the outcast. "To speak the rough truth," he says,

"I do not desire any intercourse with any persons of quality in England. They can do me no good, and I fear I can do none to them. I love the poor," he declares, "in many of them I find pure genuine grace, unmixed with paint, folly and affectation."

In 1738 Wesley's band met for the first time in London, at James Hutton's shop "The Bible and Sun" in Wild Street near Temple Bar. The society soon moved to Fetter Lane, and continued to meet there every Wednesday evening until 1740, when, serious disorders having arisen, Wesley left the place and took some of his band with him to the Foundry in Moorfields. Those who wished to join the society must have been filled with "a desire to flee from the wrath to come," and they were to show the fruits of conversion "by doing no harm, by doing good of every possible sort, by attending upon all the means of Grace." Everyone, who could possibly afford to do so, contributed something to the expense of the mission. Probably no preachers have ever attracted such crowds as John Wesley and George Whitefield. Ten thousand persons flocked to Moorfields, and even larger numbers to Blackheath, when Wesley preached there. He also preached in various churches in London.

"Preached," he says in his journal, "at St. Katherine's Cree and St. John's Wapping. I believe it pleased God to bless the first sermon most because it gave the most offence."

The prejudice against Wesley was extraordinary. "Sir,

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you must preach here no more," was said to him on several occasions when he had left the pulpit of a London church. Enthusiasm was looked upon askance, and unpleasant memories were revived of the time when "the saints" ruled England, and made it a thoroughly unpleasant country.

Many people went to his meetings with the avowed intention of breaking them up. Sometimes they were successful, but Wesley had a wonderful power. One evening at the meeting house in Long Lane, a woman "well known in these parts as neither fearing God or regarding man" was put up to interrupt and to break up the meeting. "I turned full upon her," says Wesley, "and declared the love our Lord had for her soul, she was struck to the heart and covered her face."

At Newgate, though he was first rebuffed by the authorities, Wesley had a great influence. "The felons," he says, "flocked round, to whom I spoke strong words concerning the Friend of sinners, which they received with as great amazement as if it had been a voice from heaven."

It must be admitted that none of Wesley's followers had his marvellous powers, and that some, who were unwisely chosen, brought discredit on the movement. The fierce Calvinistic preaching of George Whitefield, strongly reprobated by Wesley himself, had terrified many people out of their senses. Fifteen people, it was said, went mad after one of Whitefield's sermons, and we often hear of people shrieking, crying, and falling down as dead.

"They work on the fears of the most virtuous," says Lackington, who had himself been a Methodist. "Youth and innocence fall victims daily before their threats of hell and damnation, and the poor feeble minded instead of being comforted and encouraged are often by threats sunk into an irrecoverable state of gloomy despondency and horrible despair."

Wesley himself never preached such doctrine, but his teaching was most unpopular with most churchmen. The band was persecuted, beaten, stoned and imprisoned. In London, however, such active hostility was rare. It may be

that the attitude of the Bishop of London, Dr. Lowth, had some effect. On meeting Wesley at dinner, the worthy prelate waved him on to a higher seat. "Mr. Wesley," he said, "may I be found sitting at your feet in another world."

Such Christian tolerance was rare. The Nonconformists of the eighteenth century still laboured under the disadvantages of the Test and Corporation Acts, which had been passed in the previous century. By the first of these Acts, anyone who held any office of State or was an officer in the Army or Navy had to sign a declaration against the doctrine of transubstantiation, and to receive within six months the Holy Communion according to the rites of the Church of England. The Corporation Act imposed the same test on anyone holding a municipal post. The act was perfectly intolerable, and it is amazing that it should have remained on the Statute Book until the year 1828. It pressed particularly hardly on the London freeman. If he were elected sheriff he could not serve on account of the Corporation Act, and he was then fined for refusing to take office. The City seemed to take a pleasure in nominating Dissenters, so that a good harvest of fines might be gathered. In 1753, however, three Nonconformist citizens who had been elected sheriffs, refused to fill the office and also refused to pay. The Dissenting Deputies, a kind of committee which tried as far as possible to protect the rights and liberties of its co-religionists, backed the men. Their case was finally taken up to the House of Lords, where the City lost it, and received a stinging rebuke from Lord Mansfield.

"A dissenter's second horse," it was bitterly said, "takes him to Church." The gibe may perhaps have held some truth. To be debarred from the Army and the Navy, the Universities and from any office under the Government was a serious deprivation. It is no wonder that some men left the faith in which they had been nurtured, and joined what Voltaire called "their true religion, that in which a man makes his fortune—the Church of England."

There were some Dissenting ministers who were learned

men, and Nonconformists did what they could by founding their own colleges to make up for the lack of a university education. Often, however, those who preached in Dissenting chapels were not men of much learning. They were also very badly paid. Dr. Watts' stipend of £100 a year was a good deal more than many of his brethren received.

The number of Dissenters in London has been reckoned at 30,000. This was in 1732. There were thirty-three Baptist chapels, twenty-six Congregational, and twenty-eight Presbyterian. The Roman Catholics had nineteen places of worship, including the chapels at various foreign embassies. There were three synagogues, and various Friends' meeting-houses. It is impossible to give an account of all the religious bodies in London. They numbered many good and devout men and women, who kept the torch of religion alight in an age of indifference and ungodliness. Some mention must, however, be especially made of the Society of Friends, as they were in the van of moral endeavour and humanitarian progress. By the eighteenth century they had dropped most of their extravagant excesses, and the worst days of persecution were over. They shared the disabilities of other Nonconformist bodies, and in addition their refusal to take an oath led to much inconvenience, while they were still liable to imprisonment for their steadfast refusal to pay tithe. Like other Dissenters they were debarred from all public office, but many of them made their mark in science and medicine. The names of Lettsom, Dimsdale, and Fothergill remind us of their prominence in the medical world, and the Quakers were the first to advocate the liberation of the slaves and to condemn warfare as senseless and unchristian.

Of all the Nonconformists the Roman Catholics had the hardest lot. They were debarred, as we have said, by the Test and Corporation Acts from taking any State or municipal post. To the ignorant multitude the Pope and the Catholics were capable of any infamy. The fires of Smithfield were a tradition which men handed down to their children. Gunpowder treason was kept alive in men's minds every 5th of



November, and the Catholics, it was said, had been responsible for the Fire of London and the Popish plot. They were constantly at the mercy of ignorant and brutal mobs. They had been excluded from any benefits under the Toleration Act, and the Law bore very heavily upon them. They could not own their own chapels, but might meet by the courtesy of some individual in a building which he owned. Their largest church, which was in Lincoln's Inn Fields, had been built by funds provided by the King of Sardinia. In vain did his ambassador, during the Gordon Riots, offer the mob 500 guineas if they would spare the fine organ and the altarpiece by Casali.

Not more than eleven persons could be present at a Catholic service. A priest who in any way infringed the law against Catholics, was liable to imprisonment for life. In 1778 an Act giving some relief to the members of the Roman religion was passed, and even before that date judges and magistrates often did their best to mitigate hardship. They would ask the informers if they were quite sure that the prayers they had heard in some crowded Catholic chapel were the prayers of the Roman Church. Did the informant know Latin, or was the service perchance in French? Were the vestments the celebrant wore those of a Catholic priest, might they not have been some other kind of garb? and having got the informant into a thorough fog of contradiction, they would dismiss the case.

The Jews were treated almost as shamefully as the Roman Catholics. It is true that they were allowed to worship in their synagogues without any interference from the law, and the wealthy families enjoyed a certain amount of protection in the city. The poor Jew, however, was at the mercy of any rabble who chose to pelt and insult him, and the English mob seemed to delight in pogroms almost as much as the Hitlerised German.

In 1753 a Bill was passed to naturalise the Jews, but it was repealed the next year owing to popular clamour. Women wore ribands with "No Jews" and "Christianity for ever"

inscribed upon them. They even wore—forgetting that they had always condemned such things as popish—crucifixes round their necks and crosses in their head-dresses. The men attended dinners at which nothing but pork was served, hams, legs of pork, sausages, pig's feet, and hog's puddings. They must have been indigestible and monotonous feasts. Richard Cumberland, "thinking it was high time that something should be done for a persecuted race," wrote a play in which the hero was a Jew. It was quite well received at Drury Lane, but the deliverance of the Chosen People did not come about till later in the century. When David Mendoza, the Jew, was acclaimed one of the most celebrated prize fighters in England, the young Hebrew began to take an interest in the noble art of self-defence. He turned upon his opponents, challenged their leader to single combat and won victory and applause. From that time onwards the Jews were left alone.

Besides the various religious bodies whom we have enumerated there were two foreign churches established in London, the Moravians and the French Protestants. These two religious bodies were in communion with the English Church. The Moravians had elected Bishop Wilson of Sodor and Man as a member of their Synod, and the French parson Jacques Saurin was ordained by the Bishop of London. Wesley, as we know, came to disapprove most strongly of the Moravians and their doctrine; and though they may have had some influence, they never became established in this country and their ideal, the Catholic unity of all the churches, was certainly never realised. Their leader, Count Zizendorf, lived for a time at Lindsay House, Chelsea—that village of palaces, as it was called.

The French Protestant Church, on the other hand, was very flourishing. They had twenty-one places of worship in London. Hogarth has given us a picture of the French Church in Hog Lane, St. Giles's—a district which was largely populated with the descendants of the Huguenot refugees. A well-dressed crowd streams out of the building, and indeed,



*Noon, from the picture by Hogarth*



the French Protestants were a hard-working and prosperous community.

The eighteenth century was an age of the individualist in religion as in other things. Among these was Lady Huntingdon, who had been greatly impressed by Wesley's teaching, though she afterwards quarrelled with him, and at last broke away from the Church of England to which she had belonged. Chapels of Lady Huntingdon's connection were established all over England. The principal one in London was at Spa Fields, where Whitefield often preached.

Selina, Countess of Huntingdon, was a remarkable woman. In an age when any female originality was strongly discouraged, she became a religious leader, sending out young ministers from her training college at Trevesca to preach the gospel all over England. To her house at Chelsea she attracted such men as Chesterfield, Bolingbroke, George Selwyn, Chatham, Camden, and David Garrick. Lord Bath sent her fifty guineas for her evangelist work, and Chesterfield gave her twenty. Bolingbroke assured her that she might "command my pen when you will, it shall be drawn in your service."

Sometimes a bishop attended a service in Spa Fields. He came in quietly, not wearing episcopal dress, and sat in the dark under a gallery, in what was called "Nicodemus's Corner." Most bishops, however, disapproved of Lady Huntingdon, who certainly could be most dictatorial. One prelate complained to George III of the conduct of some of her ministers.

"Make bishops of them, make bishops of them," said the King hastily.

"Please, your majesty," said the disgusted prelate, "we cannot make a bishop of Lady Huntingdon."

"It would be a lucky circumstance if you could," the Queen said, "for she puts you all to shame."

Probably few of the rich and noble who flocked to Spa Fields or to Lady Huntingdon's drawing-room embraced her Calvinistic theology, but the influence which this lady exerted

## RELIGION

among her own class and through her ministers to the people of England was very great. In her case, as in that of Wesley, the good which they did lived after them, and sowed the seed of a religious revival.

## ANCIENT CUSTOMS

OLD customs die out when men congregate together in large towns. A few girls and boys might make expeditions into the country to collect willow catkins on the eve of Palm Sunday, or wander into the fields on May Day. At the beginning of the century, it is probable that many did so; for Addison solemnly warns his fair readers never to venture abroad in the fields in the month of May "but in the company of a parent, a guardian, or some other discreet person."

As London increased in size, however, and the country around it was covered with market gardens, expeditions to fields and woods became more difficult. The parties of youths and maidens, who went out to collect May dew or garlands of flowers, became fewer. In 1717 the maypole in the Strand, which had been set up again after the Restoration, fell into decay and was taken down. It was never replaced. Sir Isaac Newton begged for the remains of the pole and erected it in his park at Wanstead, where "it had the honour of raising the greatest telescope then known."

There were, however, May Day customs which lasted all through the century. The milkmaids and the chimney sweeps made holiday. The milkmaid's garland, as it was called, was a pyramid-like frame, covered with a white cloth, hung round with shining pewter and silver dishes. These had been borrowed from pawnbrokers for the occasion. Some of the plate was quite costly, and there was one establishment which specialised in letting out the garland to various companies of milkmaids during the first three days of May. The structure was mounted upon a kind of hand-bier, sometimes in the shape of a horse. Two men carried it through

## ANCIENT CUSTOMS

the streets and it was preceded and followed by musicians playing pipe, tabor, or fiddle. The company would stop and dance before the door of each customer, and ask for contributions towards the garland. In small businesses, where only one or two milk girls were employed, the cost of such a pageant was prohibitive. In these cases, a simpler show was devised.

“A beautiful country girl,” we are told, “dressed all in her best, and more gaily attired than on any other day, with floral adornments in her neat little hat, and on her bosom, led her cow by a rope depending from its horns, garlanded with flowers and knots of riband, the horns, head and neck of the cow were decorated in like manner; a fine net, like those on ladies’ palfreys tastefully stuck with flowers, covered Bess’s back, and even her tail was ornamented with products of the spring, and silken knots. The proprietress of the cow, a neat brisk, little, matronly body, followed on one side in holiday array, with a sprig in her country bonnet, a blooming posy in her handkerchief and ribands on her stomacher. This scene was in Westminster near the old Abbey.”

In London thirty years ago,  
When pretty milkmaids went about,  
It was a goodly sight to see  
Their May Day pageant all drawn out.

Themselves in comely colours dressed,  
Their shining garland in the middle  
A pipe and tabor on before  
Or else the foot inspiring fiddle.

They stopped at houses, where it was  
Their custom to cry “Milk below”  
And while the music played, with smiles  
Joined hands and pointed toe to toe.

Thus they tripped on, till from the door  
The hoped for annual present sent  
A signal came to curtsy low  
And at that door cease merriment.

The sweeps also had their festival on May Day. Blake and Lamb have both written with great insight and sympathy of



the climbing boys. Of all the ill-treated children of the eighteenth century these unhappy sweeps had the hardest lot, and anyone whose heart was not of stone, pitied them. "If thou meetest one of these small gentry in thy early rambles," says Elia, "it is good to give him a penny." On May Day many pennies were showered upon them and for once in the year they had a day of happiness. Though the milkmaid's garland disappeared in the eighteenth century, the sweeps Jack-in-the-Green was to be seen on every May Day almost into our own times. Indeed, there are elderly people who can remember it. It consisted of a large hooped frame about three feet in diameter, covered with holly and ivy and other green foliage. It was curved at the top, and surmounted by a garland of flowers or a flag. A man or boy walked within it, quite unseen, and as he went down the road dancing and capering the green had the appearance of a moving mountain of foliage. A crowd of chimney sweeps made up the procession, their clothes trimmed with gilt paper, and their black faces reddened with a crimson pigment known as Dutch pink. At their head marched a Lord and a Lady. The Lord, who was generally had in to grace the procession and was not a chimney sweep by trade, wore a rich laced coat, with a great buttonhole of flowers, an embroidered waistcoat, satin breeches, a cocked hat with red and yellow feathers in it, and paste shoe buckles. His hair was powdered and he carried a tall cane, with a metal top. The Lady was usually a boy, dressed out very gaudily in women's clothes, with a fashionable head-dress. At intervals during the procession, they would stop, and the Lord and Lady execute a dance together, while the sweeps beat time with brush and shovel. Sometimes they were accompanied by a one-man band, which played simultaneously on bells, drum, mouth-organ and cymbals. When the dance was over the Lord handed round his hat and the Lady a long-handled spoon to collect money from the spectators. It is horrible to think that there were some master sweeps so rapacious that they exacted a portion of their May Day takings from their unhappy apprentices.

## ANCIENT CUSTOMS

The story that Mrs. Montagu inaugurated the sweeps' yearly festival is probably not true. Her child may well have been kidnapped and sold as a sweep. Such things happened in London; but the Jack-in-the-Green originated before the days of Mrs. Montagu.

Two important dates among Londoners, were November 5 and November 9. We still have a few insignificant guys, pushed about the street by small children, who ask deprecatingly for pennies. Stouter urchins break into song and shout in treble voices,

Guy, guy, stick him up high,  
Hang him on a lamp post  
And there let him die

Similar verses were chanted in eighteenth-century London. In those days, and for many years afterwards, there was, in the Prayer Book,

“A form of prayer with thanksgiving to be used yearly on the fifth day of November for the happy deliverance of King James I and the three estates of England, from the most traitorous and bloody intended massacre by gunpowder, and also for the happy arrival of his late Majesty, King William III on this day for the deliverance of our church and nation.”

Very few of the multitudes, who celebrated Guy Fawkes' Day, knew much about its origin. They called it Pope day sometimes, and knew vaguely that it was a day on which they broke the windows of Catholic chapels and insulted people of that Faith. For weeks previously, the boys and young men of the neighbourhood would have been collecting fuel. They tore down branches of trees, pulled up rickety palings, purloined floor-boards and banisters from empty houses. There was an immense bonfire in Lincoln's Inn Fields. Fuel came all day long, as many as two hundred cartloads being necessary. The wood was carefully guarded, as the supporters of rival guys made raids upon it, and snatched away firewood for their own conflagrations. More than thirty guys were burnt upon gibbets at this bonfire. At the same time, the butchers had their bonfire in Clare Market.

## GUY FAWKES' DAY

"Large parties of butchers," we are told, "from all the markets paraded the streets, ringing peals from marrow bones and cleavers, so loud as to over-power the storms of sound, which came from the rocking belfreys of the churches. By ten o'clock London was so lit up by bonfires and fireworks, that from the suburbs it looked like one red heat. Many were the overthrows of horsemen and carriages from the discharge of hand rockets, and the pressure of moving mobs inflamed to violence by drink, and fighting their way against each other."

The guys were stuffed with straw, and clad in any old clothes that could be got. Sometimes they had a cocked hat upon their heads; but more generally they wore a gaudy paper mitre and carried a dark lantern and tinderbox. The Pope was generally the victim, but any unpopular person was likely to be burnt in effigy. A huge boot was dragged through the streets when Lord Bute was the popular ogre. The guys were often gigantic figures, and were accompanied by torch-light processions of supporters singing and shouting some such ditty as—

Please to remember the fifth of November,  
Gunpowder, treason and plot.  
We know no reason why gunpowder treason  
Should ever be forgot.

A stick and a stake for King George's sake,  
A stick and a stump for Guy Fawkes' rump.  
Holler boys, holler boys, make the bells ring,  
Holler boys, holler boys, God save the King.

So nervous were the authorities of fire, after the terrible conflagration in the previous century, that before Guy Fawkes' Day, this notice, signed by the Corporation Beadle, was left at every house in the city.

"Sir—By virtue of a precept from my Lord Mayor, in order to prevent any tumults and riots, you are required to charge all your servants and lodgers that they neither make, nor cause to be made any squibs, serpents, fire balloons or other fireworks, nor fire fling or throw them out of your house, shop or warehouse, or in the streets of this city, on

the penalties contained in an Act of Parliament, made in the tenth year of the late King William.

"Note. The Act was made perpetual, and is not expired, as some ignorantly suppose."

Of this proclamation very little if any notice was ever taken. It was like much other legislation of the eighteenth century, a dead letter. A similar precaution was taken regarding Lord Mayor's Day; but in this case the beadle was required to visit each house and acquaint the several inhabitants that squibs, serpents and other fireworks were forbidden. They were also commanded by the same beadle to adorn the fronts and balconies of their houses with their best hangings and other ornaments, and to "cause the streets in front of their respective houses to be cleanly swept, and well paved."

The full glory of the Lord Mayor's Show belonged to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It was then referred to as the London Triumph or the Pageant. In those days the city kept a poet, and even paid him a salary. It was his duty to compose the speeches for Lord Mayor's Day and write a description of the Show. Settle, the last of the city poets wrote the last pamphlet describing the pageant which was to have been held in 1708. George of Denmark, the Queen's husband, died, however, most inconveniently the day before and the whole affair was abandoned. At that date, the Lord Mayor's Show was on October 29. On October 28 the feast of St. Simon and St. Jude, the Lord Mayor had always been sworn and admitted to the Guildhall, and on the following day he was presented to the King or to the Barons of the Exchequer. In 1751, however, following the Act which altered the calendar, a Bill was passed "for the abbreviation of the Michalmas Term." If the Lord Mayor had gone to the Law Courts then, he certainly would not have found the King's representatives, as it was vacation-time. It was resolved, therefore, at a Court of Aldermen held on Shrove Tuesday in 1752, that the Lord Mayor should be sworn and admitted on November 8, and his presentation and the pageant and feasting which followed, should be on November 9.

## THE LORD MAYOR'S SHOW

Though it might have been shorn of its glory, it was still a fine show. As early as seven in the morning, the livery-men of the City company, to which the Lord Mayor-elect belonged, assembled at their hall, where they met the masters and wardens all dressed in their gowns. They formed themselves into a huge procession. There were gentleman ushers, in velvet coats and chains of office, bearing white staves, the King's trumpeter carrying silver trumpets, with a sergeant trumpeter at their head, wearing two scarves made of the Lord Mayor's and company's colours. There were foot marshals and horse marshals, fence masters and javelin men, three gallants bearing the banners of what was called the diadem, namely the King's, Queen's and City's ensigns. There was a host of poor pensioners of the company, in bright-coloured gowns and caps, bearing the arms of their benefactors. Thus formed, the procession marched to the house of the Lord Mayor. In those early days, he mounted his horse and rode to the Guildhall, the aldermen accompanying him upon horseback. Sir Gilbert Heathcote, in the reign of Queen Anne, was the last Lord Mayor to ride at his mayoralty. After that it began to be whispered that my lord could not ride if he would, and a state coach succeeded the prancing steed. At the Guildhall the procession was met by the outgoing Lord Mayor, and his successor was robed in the appropriate gown, fur hood and scarf. They then marched through King Street, down to the Three Cranes' Wharf, where they got into their barges and were rowed to Westminster. They disembarked at New Palace Stairs, and, the javelin men and others making a lane, the Lord Mayor passed to Westminster Hall, where he took the oaths, and left a handsome donation for the poor. On their way up the river, the Stationers' Company pulled their barge under Lambeth Palace, and were regaled with sixteen bottles of the Archbishop's choicest wine. This custom originated in the reign of Anne, when the Master of the Stationers' Company, being a near relation of Archbishop Tenison, used to call in his barge in full state to enquire for his august relative.

“The Archbishop, being informed that the number of the company within the barge was thirty-two, he thought that a pint of wine for each would not be disagreeable, and ordered at the same time, that a sufficient quantity of new bread and old cheese with plenty of strong ale should be given to the watermen and attendants.”

The Stationers' Company, we may remember in passing, is also provided for under the will of Alderman John Morton. He left a sum of money for a gift of spiced buns and ale for the livery-men, after service in the crypt of St. Paul's on Ash Wednesday.

The Lord Mayor was rowed back from Westminster to Blackfriars, and alighting there, to the accompaniment of beating drums and three volleys from the Artillery Company, he proceeded through Cheapside to Guildhall. On the way there were arranged on stages in the street various tableaux with emblematical figures, representing industry, ingenuity, diligence, nobility, and honour. The old giants Gog and Magog were fetched from the Guildhall to grace the show, and various historical personages connected with the City such as Sir Richard Whittington, Sir John Hawkwood, Sir Thomas Gresham and others were represented. Figures of animals were very popular. There were “lively carved camels,” native Indians with golden robes and many other representations. As the century advanced, the pageants became less brilliant, and finally they almost disappeared. The old idea of a fine display for the benefit of London crowds, died away. Corporations began to ask what such shows cost, and to veto them as a waste of money. The procession became a very poor thing. The one entertainment, which was preserved in all its glory, was the banquet at the Guildhall. This was certainly very sumptuous indeed.

“The tables,” we read in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1773, “groan beneath the weight of solids and dainties of every kind in season, the dishes of pastry, etc., were elegantly adorned with flowers of various sorts, interspersed with bay leaves, and many an honest freeman got a nosegay at the city's

## A LORD MAYOR'S BANQUET

expense. A superb piece of confectionary was placed on the Lord Mayor's table and the whole entertainment was splendid and magnificent."

The following is the bill of fare for a dinner which was given to George III in 1761, together with the prices which were carefully appended. It was the coronation year, so probably a more than usually splendid banquet was provided.

	£	s.	d.
12 dishes of olio turtle potages and soups . . . . .	24	2	0
12 ditto of fish, viz. John Dories, red mullets, etc. . . . .	24	2	0
7 ditto roast venison . . . . .	10	0	0
3 Westfalia hams, consume and richly ornamented . . . . .	6	6	0
2 dishes of poulets a la royale . . . . .	2	2	2
2 ditto of tongues espaniole . . . . .	3	3	0
6 dishes a la reine . . . . .	6	6	0
1 ditto tendron de veaux a la Danzic . . . . .	2	2	0
1 haricot £1 1s. 1 Dish popiets of veal glasse . . . . .	1	4	0
2 dishes filets of lamb a la comte . . . . .	2	2	0
2 compotes of squabs . . . . .	2	2	0
2 dishes of mutton a la memorance . . . . .	2	2	0
32 dishes of fine vegetables . . . . .	16	0	0

### SECOND SERVICE

6 dishes of fine ortolans . . . . .	2	5	4
10 ditto quails . . . . .	15	0	0
10 ditto notts . . . . .	30	0	0
1 ditto wheateyears . . . . .	1	1	0
1 goodeveau patte . . . . .	1	10	0
1 perigord pie . . . . .	1	10	0
1 dish of pea chicks . . . . .	1	10	0
4 dishes of woodcocks . . . . .	4	4	0
2 dishes of pheasants . . . . .	3	3	0
4 dishes of teal . . . . .	3	3	0
4 ditto of snipes . . . . .	3	3	0
2 ditto of partridges . . . . .	2	2	0
2 dishes of patties royal . . . . .	3	0	0

### THIRD SERVICE

1 Ragout Royal . . . . .	1	1	0
8 dishes of fine green morells . . . . .	8	8	0
10 ditto fine green peas . . . . .	10	10	0
3 dishes of asparagus heads . . . . .	2	2	0
3 ditto fine fat livers . . . . .	1	1	0

# ANCIENT CUSTOMS

	£	s.	d.
3 ditto fine combs . . . . .	1	11	0
5 ditto green truffles . . . . .	5	5	0
3 dishes of artichokes a la Provinciale . . . . .	2	12	6
5 dishes of mushrooms au blanc . . . . .	2	12	6
1 ditto cardons a la beljamee . . . . .	10		6
1 dish of knots of eggs . . . . .	10		6
1 dish of ducks' tongues. . . . .	10		6
3 dishes of pith . . . . .	1	11	6
1 dish of truffles in oil . . . . .	10		6
4 dishes of poulets . . . . .	2	2	0
2 dishes of ragout mille . . . . .	2	0	0

There was a fourth service of "curious ornamented cakes, blanc-mangers, clear marbrays, fine cut pastry and mille feuilles," and the centre of the table was ornamented with a "grand pyramid of demies of shell fish, cold things of sorts, viz. temples, shapes, landscapes in jellies, savoury cakes and almond gothic." The expenditure on the King's table alone amounted to £374.

The swearing in of the sheriffs of the City of London and Middlesex was also a fine ceremony. It took place on September 30, and the following account of it is given in the *Gentleman's Magazine*.

"The Lord Mayor and Aldermen proceed from Guildhall, and the two sheriffs with their respective companies proceed from their particular halls and embark on the Thames, his Lordship in the city barge and the sheriffs in the company's barge, and thus go in aquatic state up the river to Palace Yard. They land there and proceed to the Court of Exchequer, where, after salutations to the bench (the Curisitor Baron presiding) the Recorder presents the two sheriffs. The several writs are then read and the sheriffs and the senior under-sheriffs take the usual oaths. . . . The tenants of a manor in Shropshire are directed to come forth to do their suit and service. The Corporation of London, being tenant of the manor, the senior alderman below the chair steps forward and chops a single stick in token of its having been customary for the tenants of the manor to supply their lord with fuel. The owners of a forge in the parish of St. Clement (which formerly belonged to the city, and stood in the high



road from the Temple to Westminster, but now no longer exists) are then called forth to do their suit and service, when an officer of the court, in the presence of the senior alderman, produces six horseshoes, and sixty-one hob nails, which are counted over in form before the Curisitor Baron, who on this particular occasion is the representative of the sovereign. The origin of this latter usage is a grant in 1235 from Henry III to Walter de Bruin, a farrier, of the said piece of ground, whereon to erect a forge, he rendering annually to the exchequer for the same, a quit rent of six horseshoes with the nails belonging to them. . . . After these ceremonies the civic authorities re-embark in their barges and return to Blackfriars Bridge, whence they proceed in state carriages to the company's hall, and partake of an elegant dinner."

After two such days as November 5 and Lord Mayor's Day the feast of Christmas fell rather flat and tame. Christmas had scarcely recovered from the ban of the Puritans, and although it was still kept with much feasting and rejoicing in some parts of the country, in London little notice was taken of it. There were no mummers, few carol singers or hand-bell ringers. There were certainly the waits, companies of musicians, who paraded the streets at night and generally played very discordantly; but they were generally regarded as rather a nuisance. For some days before Christmas, the Bellman in every London parish went round ringing a hand-bell and reciting a copy of Christmas verses, for which he expected a present on Boxing Day. The shops closed on Christmas Day, indeed it was the only day in the year, except Sunday, when the tradesman's assistant could be sure of a holiday. London churches were decorated with holly and ivy; but the yule log, the boar's head and the wassail bowl belonged to simple rural communities. It is said that Dickens revived Christmas in England. Be that as it may, it was often scarcely regarded in the eighteenth century, and polite society affected to despise it. There are superior people in these days, who say that they hate Christmas; but they are generally dragged into the common rejoicings somehow or other.

"I cannot help being so ungenteel," says Miss Talbot,

writing to her friend Mrs. Carter, "as to send you the good wishes of the season, though to any of the fine folk of that town (London) it would certainly be an affront." The middle classes still ate some of the old Christmas dishes. They had mince-pies in the shape of coffins, which were supposed to represent the manger at Bethlehem. They sometimes drank plum porridge, the old English dish which preceded plum pudding. It was a sort of soup made of raisins, and it was served in a bowl or tureen. The chaplain at St. James's was, it is said, the last man to serve this dish upon his table, and he kept up the custom into the nineteenth century. Francis Misson, who died in 1722, speaks of another dish which was served at that season.

"Every family," he says, "against Christmass, makes a famous Christmass pye. It is a great nostrum; the composition of this pasty is a most learned mixture of neat's tongues, chicken, eggs, sugar, raisons, lemon and orange peel, various kinds of spicery, etc."

We still have the custom of giving Christmas boxes on December 26; but in the eighteenth century the practice was far more widespread. A writer in 1731 thus describes it:

"By that time I was up, my servants could do nothing but run to the door. Enquiring the meaning, I was answered, the people were come for their Christmas box: this was logic to me, but I found at last that because I had laid out a great deal of ready money with my brewer, baker and other tradesmen, they kindly thought it my duty to present their servants with some money for the favour of having their goods. This provoked me a little, but being told it was the custom I complied. These were followed by the watch, the beadles, dustmen and an innumerable tribe; but what vexed me most was the clerk, who has an extraordinary place, and makes as good an appearance as most tradesmen in the parish; to see him come a-boxing alias a-begging, I thought was intolerable; however, I found it was the custom to, so I gave him half a crown, as I was obliged to do to the Bellman for breaking my rest for many nights together. . . . In the evening away we went to a neighbouring ale house, where abundance of these

## TWELFTH DAY

gentry were assembled round a stately piece of roast beef and as large a plum pudding."

New Year's Day, which had been a day for the giving of presents as late as the seventeenth century, was little regarded in the eighteenth, though the two chaplains-in-waiting upon the King still found half-crowns under their plates when they dined with his Majesty. Some people put on new clothes on New Year's Day, and it seems a curious custom in mid-winter; but we must remember that the New Year had formerly commenced on March 25 and as late as 1752, when the change of the calendar was made, the legal and civil years began on Lady Day.

Christmas often lasted till Candlemas day, February 2, or at any rate till Plough Monday which was the first Monday after twelfth day. It is a great pity that that festival is no longer observed. Twelfth Day cakes and parties lasted on well into the nineteenth century, indeed there was a time when Christmas seemed a poor thing beside it. A writer in the *Universal Magazine* in 1774, describes how he went to a friend's house for a Twelfth Night celebration.

"I did not return," he says, "till I had been present at drawing King and Queen and eaten a slice of Twelfth cake, made by the fair hands of my good friend's consort. After tea a noble cake was produced and two bowls containing the fortunate chances of the different sexes. Our host filled up the tickets; the whole company, except the King and Queen, were to be ministers of state, maids of honour, or ladies of the bedchamber. Our kind host and hostess, whether by design or accident, became King and Queen. According to Twelfth Day law each party is to support their character till midnight."

A less-pleasing custom of the day was for crowds of small boys to assemble round the windows of pastry-cooks, ostensibly to gaze upon the cakes. Actually, however, they awaited an opportunity to nail the dresses and coat tails of customers and others to the bottom of the window frames.

Candlemas Day, which had marked the ending of Christmas

festivities in some parts of the country, was not generally regarded in the eighteenth century. There is, however, a delightful account in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of 1734 of "a grand entertainment for the judges, serjeants, etc., in the Temple Hall."

"The Lord Chancellor, the Earl of Macclesfield, the Bishop of Bangor, together with other distinguished persons were present, and the Prince of Wales attended incog. At night the comedy 'Love for Love' was acted by the Company of His Majesty's Revels, from the Haymarket theatre, who received a present of £50 from the Societies of the Temple. The judges, according to an ancient custom, danced round the coal fire singing an old French song."

The pancake bell was still rung on Shrove Tuesday, at some of the London churches. Originally the bell had sounded to call the faithful to the church for confession. After the Reformation, however, it was taken as a signal to the housewife to make her pancakes. In the previous century, there had been much feasting and merrymaking on Shrove Tuesday; but the only relic of this in London was the cruel custom of throwing at cocks or beating a hen to death. These barbarous practices were continued through the century. The *Tatler* might condemn them, the *Gentleman's Magazine* might appeal "to a future judgment—certainly there will be one sometime—when the meanest creature of God will have justice done it." Londoners flocked to the Dog and Duck, or to Hockley in the Hole to watch this cruel sport. There were even schools where the boys would bring a cock with them to be thrown at on Shrove Tuesday morning, and some schoolmasters encouraged the sport for the sake of the dead fowl which was their perquisite. Jack o' Lent, who came out on the following day, was a sort of guy, a figure stuffed with straw and dressed in old clothing which was carried through the streets on Ash Wednesday. He represented the spirit of Lent, fasting, abstinence and mourning, and was accordingly unpopular. The boys pelted him with sticks and stones, and often burnt him on a bonfire. As the outward practice of

## VALENTINES. MAUNDY MONEY

religion declined, and the rigours of Lent became a thing of the past, Jack o' Lent retired into obscurity, and was no longer seen in the streets.

The pleasant feast of St. Valentine was held on February 14. There were various ways of celebrating the day. In some parts of the country and even in London the first girl whom a young man saw on Valentine's morning, who did not belong to his own family, was his Valentine. More usually, however, a boy would settle for himself who his Valentine would be. He would send her a present, perhaps a handkerchief, or a bunch of ribbons or a pair of gloves. As the century advanced, however, the Valentine like a glorified Christmas card was sold in all the stationers' shops. It had perhaps a couple of hearts transfixing with an arrow, Cupid with his bow and the motto, "Love is but a madrigal" or "to my own sweet Valentine." The twopenny postman staggered under loads of 200,000 of these missives, we are told, and stationers did a roaring trade.

William III was the last English sovereign who washed the feet of poor persons on Maundy Thursday. In the eighteenth century this duty was apparently put upon the Archbishops. We hear of the Archbishop of York washing the feet at the Maundy in Whitehall in 1727, and the Archbishop of Canterbury doing the same in 1731. A few years later this part of the ceremony was discontinued, though the giving of the Maundy money and a present of provisions to the old men and women still continued.

On Good Friday boys came round the streets very early in the morning selling hot cross buns, and singing or shouting :

Hot cross buns, hot cross buns,  
Smoking hot, piping hot,  
Just come out of the baker's shop  
One a penny poker, two a penny tongs,  
Three a penny fire shovel, hot cross buns.

On Good Friday, too, sixty of the youngest children of Christ's Hospital went to All Hallows', Lombard Street, and there, after the service, were presented with a bag of raisins by

the churchwardens. This curious bequest had been left in the will of Peter Simmonds at the close of the fourteenth century.

Easter eggs were still given as presents. They were generally ordinary hens' eggs, which had been boiled with cochineal or logwood, occasionally they were even gilded. At St. Mary Woolnoth's and possibly at other churches, too, Easter eggs were offered to the congregation as they left the building. These eggs were coloured, and had the words, "My Redeemer" written on them.

Easter Monday was a great day for the city. The roads which led to Epping Forest were crowded with men on horseback, people in coaches, carts and every kind of vehicle. It was the day of the Epping Hunt. My Lord Mayor and the aldermen had been wont to ride out to hunt the stag, and in the early days of the century still did so. The stag, a poor carted animal decorated with ribbons, was released somewhere about Woodforde Cross and hunted through the forest.

The custom known as beating the bounds still exists in some parishes. It is of extremely ancient origin. There is mention of it in the laws of Alfred and Æthelstan and it is said to have been derived from the Roman feast of Terminalia when libations were poured out, and cakes were offered to Terminus the God of Landmarks. In the country it was anciently combined with Rogationtide processions and prayers for the harvest. In the town it was simply a perambulation of the parish to ascertain the boundaries, an important matter in days when maps were scarce and unreliable. The clergyman with the churchwardens and other parochial officials accompanied by a crowd of urchins, marched in procession round the parish. At various spots a pause was made and at a boundary it was often customary for the boys to be whipped or violently bumped against the boundary stones. Then in after-years when any of them had qualified as oldest inhabitants their testimony would be valuable in any dispute as to parochial divisions and responsibilities. They were generally indemnified for their pains by the gift of pennies, and some

## OAKAPPLE DAY

share in the Church Ale or Feast which followed the perambulation.

The old idea of a Church Ale was that the churchwardens should purchase a large quantity of liquor as cheaply as possible, and sell it to the parishioners for as much as it would fetch. The proceeds were devoted to church expenses, and the Church Ale was the precursor of our modern fête or bazaar. Originally there had been several Church Ales in the year, but in the eighteenth century only the Whitsun Ale was celebrated. By this time it had generally become a speculation on the part of innkeepers and had nothing to do with the church.

For a hundred years or more after the return of the Merry Monarch, Oakapple Day was celebrated with much rejoicing. In the country, indeed, it was observed until comparatively recent years. A service of thanksgiving was held in all the churches, and in London special sermons were preached. It was not a general holiday, though the public offices were shut and all who could do so absented themselves from labour. Green boughs were collected from the country and every house had an oak tree with gilded oakapples, or gilded balls to represent oakapples. Often these large boughs arched across the street and formed an avenue, and there were streamers of flowers and flags across the streets. Processions were formed of small boys and youths blowing horns, and everyone had to wear an oakapple or at least a bunch of oak leaves on pain of being ducked in the river or splashed with the mud and water of the streets.

## SERVANTS

THE servants of London demand a chapter to themselves. There seems to have been an army of them. In every great house an immense number was kept. No doubt there was a good deal of work in these large establishments. Gas, electric light, modern plumbing and hot-water arrangements have simplified domestic life in a way which we can hardly realise. According to foreign observers, the English houses were generally well kept. They were washed, both inside and out, every Saturday, De La Rochefoucauld tells us. He was full of praise, until one unlucky day, when he penetrated into the kitchen. This and all the premises not usually seen, he describes as filthy. "Women are usually employed," he says, "and are as black as coal, their arms bared to the elbow, are disgustingly dirty." When due allowance has been made for the labour of running a great house, it must still be admitted that many of the servants had very little to do. The steward, the valets, the housekeeper and the many footmen were highly ornamental persons, and had very soft jobs. Probably those who were most hardly treated and who did all the work, were the kitchen-maids, under-house-maids or scullions in big houses. The upper servants put upon them in every way, and often treated them with gross cruelty.

At the beginning of the century, it was customary for the nobility to keep several lackeys to run before their coaches. They were known as running footmen, and they could keep up a steady pace of seven miles an hour. They carried white canes with a ball at the top, which was filled with a mixture of egg and wine to support them on their arduous way. When the roads improved and carriages could travel more



## THE FOOTMEN

rapidly, even egg flip proved an insufficient restorative. The running footmen had generally disappeared, though old "Q" retained his till the end of the century.

In the memoirs of John Macdonald, the eighteenth-century footman, which Mr. Beresford rescued from oblivion, we can read something of the life of a lackey in the best families. He was a man of some education, whose father had perished at Culloden, and according to his account he lived a thoroughly idle, careless life, working for about two hours a day, breaking the hearts of fair ladies and waiting-maids, and drawing the enormous wage of £20 a year. He had a suit of fustian, when he was not in livery, and one of blue Yorkshire cloth, while an employer who liked his servants "to go genteelly" gave him "twelve pairs of silk stockings in a parcel to wear." Macdonald may have exaggerated about his easy life, or the masters, whom he generally despised, may have been uncommonly indulgent; but he seems to have done very little work indeed in most of his places. It is not surprising that men who had so little to do should get into mischief. In 1701 it had been found necessary to forbid servants to wear swords; but the footmen found that canes and fists did very well. They were foremost in any brawl in the tavern or the street, they were the terror of the theatre, where they sat in their own gallery, shouted, cat-called and pelted the actors. Robert Dodsley, who had himself been in service, describes the life in his poem "The Footman."

As soon as laziness will let me,  
I rise from bed and down I set me,  
To cleaning glasses, knives and plate.

He goes on to describe his toilet, how he cleans his shoes, powders his wig and brushes his clothes, "takes off his beard" and washes his face. Then he runs round the town on errands from his mistress.

Then home return full fraught with news,  
Here some short time doth interpose;  
Till warm effluvias greet the nose.  
Which from the spits and kettles fly  
Declaring dinner time is nigh.

## SERVANTS

He lays the table with knives and forks, folded napkins, salt and bread, the sideboard being set out, "with plate and glass and china ware." This is the only pleasant hour, Dodesley says, which he has in the whole day.

I hear and mark the courtly phrases,  
And all the elegance which passes.

Tea follows dinner and the footman pours out "the green or the bohea." In the evening he sallies out in front of his mistress's chair, with a lighted flambeau in his hand.

From place to place with speed we fly,  
And rat-tat-tat the knockers cry.  
"Pray is your lady, Sir, within?"  
If not go on, if yes, we enter in.

While his mistress pays her call the footman waits in the servants' hall.

Amongst a crowd of brother skips,  
Drinking small beer and talking smut,

and abusing their masters and mistresses until it is time to go. The day ends, perhaps, with the theatre, the opera, or the assembly.

Then home to sup and thus we end the day.

Servants had their own houses of call, where they formed clubs and coteries. The running footmen frequented one tavern, the indoor lackeys another. The coachmen went, perhaps, to the Horse and Groom, and the butlers and valets to some very select and respectable house. Where the steward went it is difficult to say. Was there any inn or tavern in London, sufficiently select for that august being? Servants were generally known by the names of their employers, and there was a dreadful moment when the Archbishop of Canterbury was reported to be lying on a tavern floor too drunk to be moved.

Servants, it was said, took bribes from their master's protégés and helped themselves to whatever they could. "Jemmy Pelham is dead," says Walpole, "and has left to

his servants what little his servants have left to him." Cooks made a good thing by selling the broken victuals at the back door, even tea leaves were a marketable commodity. Valets sold their masters' discarded clothes, and waiting-maids were furious when their mistresses cut up silk and satin dresses to make patchwork, or exchanged them for the china ornaments which were so fashionable.

Maid-servants were accused of spending all their money upon dress. As they generally got £5 a year, and clothes were very dear, this is not surprising. They would entertain their lovers in the kitchen, and the numbers of poor girls who got into trouble, and were cast out to fend for themselves in a wicked and cruel city, was very great. Waiting-maids, we are told, aided and abetted their mistresses in their intrigues, took bribes from their lovers, and made up many a match between heiresses and impecunious suitors.

Swift's *Advice to Servants* is, of course, a satire, and must be read accordingly; but there was probably some truth in his coarse and vigorous invective.

"As' to the common and menial servants," says a Portuguese traveller in 1730, "they have great wages, are well kept and clothed, but are notwithstanding, the plague of almost every house in town. They form themselves into societies or rather confederacies, contributing to the maintenance of each other when out of place, and if any of them cannot manage the family, where they are entertained, as they please, immediately they give notice they will be gone. There is no speaking to them, they are above correction."

Complaints of this sort come down to us through the ages, and are not unknown in the present day. Defoe, who was always praising former times, declared that wages were too high. Maid-servants, who formerly got £3 or £4, asked £5, £6 and £7 a year, and did less work. Quite a number would be kept in tradesmen's families, where formerly there might have been two. At a time when work in shop or mill meant long hours of hard labour domestic service was looked upon with favour.

"The poorest squire, as well as the richest peer," says Smollett, "must have his house in town and make a figure with an extraordinary number of domestics. The plough boys, cow-herds and lower hinds are debauched and seduced by the appearance and discourse of these cockscombs in livery, when they make their summer excursions. They desert their dirt and drudgery and swarm up to London in the hopes of getting into service, where they can live luxuriously and wear fine clothes."

Domestic service was not despised by farmers or clergymen's families, and a large number of waiting-gentlewomen were drawn from the upper classes. Every woman did not marry in the eighteenth century, though the female surplus had not reached its present large dimensions. These unfortunate spinsters were often left almost penniless, for what money there was had to go to the eldest son to keep up the family property. It was considered quite genteel to be a waiting-gentlewoman, indeed it was a much-coveted position.

"Scarcely a wench," says a lady, writing to the *Idler* in 1750, "was to be got for all work, since education had made such numbers of fine ladies that nobody would accept a lower title than that of waiting maid, or something that might qualify her to wear laced shoes and long lace ruffles, and to sit at work in the parlour window."

It was better to be a waiting-gentlewoman than to be a governess or teach in a school. With kindly and considerate people, the life was not a hard one, and many families had impecunious relatives, whom they thus supported in a cheap and useful manner. When employers were harsh, unscrupulous or thoughtless, the life of the waiting-gentlewoman could be very sad indeed. There were so many of these poor women, thrown on an unfeeling world, that unemployment was an ever-present bugbear, and they did not dare to leave an uncomfortable situation. They stayed where they were until actually dislodged, getting up my lady's caps and washing her laces, combing Fido and feeding the macaw, eating the food that the underservants would not touch, and perhaps, if they

were very fortunate, marrying my lord's chaplain, or the half-pay lieutenant across the way.

The ordinary servants had no hesitation about giving warning. They had their own societies into which they paid regularly and from which they drew money when they were out of work. They left a place at a moment's notice, if they heard of another, where the wages and vails were likely to be higher; and who could blame them? They were, as Addison pointed out

"in a lower degree what their masters themselves are, and usually affect an imitation of their manners, and you have in liveries, beaux, fops and cockscombs in as high perfection as among people that keep equipages. . . . You shall presently meet with lovers and men of intrigue among the lacqueys, as well as at White's or in the side boxes."

Few masters realised, however, that their servants were people of like passions as themselves. They expected a high standard of virtue and honesty, far higher than they ever attained to themselves, and they seldom got it.

"I had certainly drunk too much, sir," said a coachman to the master who was dismissing him for having overturned the carriage the night before. "But gentlemen, you know, sometimes get drunk."

"I don't say you were very drunk, for a gentleman," said the employer, "but you were damned drunk for a coachman, so go about your business."

In those days it could certainly be said that the people who deserved good servants generally got them. Employers who regarded servants as entirely different and inferior to themselves, were sure to be ill-served.

"Regardez cette animal," said a lady of her waiting-woman. "Considerez ce néant, voilà une belle ame pour être immortelle."

Masters were as much despised by their servants, who sometimes got a little of their own back on an unreasonable employer. Lord Thurlow, that "ill-natured and unfriendly man," was one day storming as usual at his old valet.

"Go to the devil, do," he exclaimed. "Go, I say, to the devil!"

"Give me a character, my Lord," the servant pleaded. "People like, you know, to have characters from their acquaintances."

On the other hand there could be very real friendship and devotion between masters and servants. Cowper tells us of a man he had, who was

"the very mirror of fidelity and affection for his master, and whereas the Turkish spy says he kept no servant because he would not have an enemy in the house, I hired mine because I would have a friend. Men do not usually bestow these encomiums on their lacqueys, nor do they usually deserve them; but I have had experience of mine, both in sickness and in health, and never saw his fellow."

There were doubtless many other good and faithful servants, who became the loved and honoured friends of the families with whom they lived. The novels of the day tell us of these excellent retainers. Sometimes they are rather stupid, grateful, country bumpkins, like Humphrey Clinker, at others they are wonderful old men or faithful maids, who follow the heroine through all vicissitudes, refusing wages and dying in the last chapter, as the sound of wedding bells steals across the landscape.

Servants' wages had begun to rise. It was no longer possible to get a maid of all work for 30s. a year as in the good old days in the seventeenth century. She was now asking as much as four or five pounds, and fears were expressed that cooks would soon have to be paid £20 a year. It was the custom in many households to pay the servants board wages all the year round, and out of this they were sometimes able to save. The footmen finished up what their masters had left after a tavern dinner, the maids ate the viands which came out of the dining-room, if the cook did not sell them all at the back door. When board wages were not given, servants insisted, very properly, on having exactly the same food as their masters and mistresses. The cheese-paring

economy of inferior food for the staff was one of the unpleasant products of the nineteenth century. There were also the vails to be considered and in a household where much company was entertained, these were considerable. It amazed and horrified foreigners, when, after dining at a friend's table, they found a row of servants drawn up in the hall with their hands stretched out expecting tips.

"The English nobility and gentry," says a critic, "ruin their being well served by a licentious and mistaken habit of suffering their servants to receive money from any other persons than themselves. In fact, the domestic scarce conceives himself the menial servant of him who supplies him with his daily bread and apparel, and in general has very little good will towards him."

Some foreigners did not understand the custom at all. There was my Lord Taaffe, of Irish extraction, but in the Austrian service, who always attended his friends to the door himself, and when he saw them offering any money to the servants, used to say, "If you do give, give it to me, for it was I that did buy the dinner."

When Sir Timothy Waldo was leaving the Duke of Newcastle's after a dinner-party, he offered a crown piece to the cook, who was waiting at the door.

"Sir," said the man very decidedly, "I do not take silver."

"Don't you, indeed," replied Sir Timothy, "I do not give gold," and he put the crown piece back in his pocket.

A poor man could not afford to dine out. He would hardly get away from the house under a guinea, and if he paid a week's visit, about £5 would have to be disbursed. There were loud complaints concerning these vails. It was said to be disgraceful that people should leave their servants to be paid by their guests; grand juries even declared that vails ought to be abolished; but this was found to be quite impossible. Not only did servants expect a fee when their master's guests departed; but everyone, who played cards in a private house, slipped some money under the candlesticks. This was to pay for the cards, which the servants were expected to

provide, and which were their property when the game was finished. A guest at the Duchess of Bedford's on dropping a piece of silver on the floor remarked, "Oh, never mind, let the groom of the chambers have it"; the Duchess retorted, "Let the carpetsweeper have it. The groom of the chambers never takes anything but gold."

As wages increased, vails became rather less, and the retinue, which expected to be remembered by a departing guest, was somewhat curtailed.

If the vails struck foreigners with surprise, they were also amazed at the independence of English servants. On the Continent they were considered as little better than serfs, but in this country, if a master struck his lackey, he was likely to get a drubbing in return. Indeed, there were instances of servants having killed the employer, who beat or ill-treated them.

Education, as we have said, was not general among the poorer classes, yet there were servants who wrote good letters and expressed themselves well. John Macdonald has left most entertaining memoirs, and the Verneys had servants who wrote far better than their employers. There was also Molly Leapor who was cook-maid in a gentleman's family and who possessed the works of Dryden and Pope. She broke out into verse and wrote some lines about a dairy maid and a cow, which was published among her *Poems on Several Occasions*. Some waiting-maids were great novel readers. Books could be borrowed for threepence from the circulating libraries, and many a weary damsel waiting up till dawn, for her mistress's return, solaced herself with the adventures of that tiresome piece of prudery the servant girl, Pamela Andrews.

A few words must be said about the negro servants, who were such a feature of eighteenth-century London. The American and West Indian planters brought them back with them to this country, and at first they were regarded as slaves. Lord Mansfield declared, however, in 1772, that there could be no slavery in England, and that any bondman setting foot



## NEGRO SERVANTS

in this country became automatically free. For the most part the negro servants remained in England, getting their living as servants, or occasionally in trade. It was very fashionable to keep a black servant and they were regarded with a kindly amusement by most people. There was no prejudice against their black skins and in some cases they settled down and married English women.

## FOOD, DRINK, AND THE HOUSEHOLD

ENGLISH food, thanks to tins and refrigerators, is becoming a by-word; but it was not always so. Foreigners, even Frenchmen, often commented favourably upon English food. True it was largely of the roast and boiled order, and there was a great deal too much of it; but in the country at least it was good and fresh. Matthew Bramble, in *Humphrey Clinker*, has much to say about the goodness of his own five-year-old mutton, his "delicious veal fattened with nothing but mother's milk," his "rabbits panting from the warren," "his trout and salmon struggling from the stream." He contrasts all this, and "the salads roots and pot herbs" from his own garden "with the sort of food he gets in London." His bread, he complains, "is a deleterious paste, mixed up with chalk, alum and bone ash," and that the London people preferred because of its whiteness to the honest wholemeal bread of the country. The veal, Matt complains, is "so void of all taste, nourishment and flavour that a man might dine as comfortably on a white fricassée of kid-skin gloves, or chip hats from Leghorns." He declared that the vegetables which taste of nothing but the dunghill are boiled with brass halfpence to improve their colour, and that the pork "is an abominable carnivorous animal, fed with horse flesh and distillers' grains."

"Of the fish," he adds, "I need say nothing in this hot weather but that it comes sixty, seventy, fourscore, and a hundred miles by land carriage, a circumstance sufficient without any comment, to turn a Dutchman's stomach, even if his nose was not saluted in every alley with the sweet savour of *fresh* mackerel selling by retail."

Smollett doubtless exaggerated the bad things of life. He

was perhaps getting a little of his own back on some abominable tavern dinner, or the smell of the fish shop over the way, though he ought to have known what bad food really was, as he had been surgeon on board a man-of-war.

Be this as it may, we hear quite as much of the good food of London as of the bad. The citizen of the better class was generally very particular as to what he ate, and his wife would not have been put off with tough veal or the decaying cabbages of Covent Garden. The purchasing of provisions certainly needed care and circumspection, for the few feeble laws against adulteration were seldom enforced, but fresh food could be got. According to the *Tatler* it was the roast and boiled of old England which won Marlborough's wars. "Consider," says Steele, "what work our countrymen would have made at Blenheim and Ramillies if they had been fed with fricacies and ragousts."

He is much disgusted with these French dishes which among the very rich were creeping in and ousting the good sirloin and the honest apple pie. He goes to dine with a friend, who was "a great admirer of the French cookery." There he saw a larded turkey which he took

"to be a roasted porcupine, a rabbit which was a sort of meat I never cared for. At last I discovered with some joy, a pig at the lower end of the table and begged a gentleman that was near it, to cut me a piece of it, upon which the gentleman of the house said, with great civility, 'I am sure you will like the pig for it was whipped to death.' I must confess," Steele adds, "I heard him with horror, and could not eat an animal that had died so tragical a death."

The recipes of our ancestors fill our economical minds with amazement. The footman Macdonald was very proud of his Queen of Scott's soup which was made of six chickens and eight eggs.

Mrs. Glass recommends six pounds of butter as sufficient for the crust of a goose pie, a quart of cream and the whites of nine eggs are two of the ingredients of an almond cream. An Uxbridge cake required a pound of wheat flour, seven

## FOOD, DRINK AND THE HOUSEHOLD

pounds of currants, and four pounds of butter. A "hedg-hog," which, by the way, was a Lenten dish, required a quart of almonds, six eggs and a quart of cream.

Some eighteenth-century dishes and beverages have entirely vanished from our tables. Hasty pudding made of flour and water with a mixture of brown sugar and butter poured over it has disappeared. Perhaps it is as well. A bean tansy which was compounded of beans mixed with butter, eggs, pepper, salt, cloves, some slices of bacon and the juice of the tansy to taste, baked in the oven sounds very good; but there was another sort of bean tansy which consisted of beans, sugar sack and cream, garnished with orange peel, which we need hardly regret. Crowdie, which was a broth thickened with oatmeal, and frumenty, milk with barley or wheat in it are no longer to be found. We do not eat hog's ears or cockscombs with forcemeat, nor is the sturgeon to be seen in fishmongers' shops. The bitter juice of the tansy (*Tanacetum vulgare*) was also used in cakes and puddings, particularly at Easter-time.

On Easter Sunday be the pudding seen  
To which the tansy lends her sober green.

Gooseberries were served with mackerel, currants with veal, and a honey sauce was sometimes poured over beef.

Syllabubs which were compounded of milk with wine or cider were much eaten in the summer in the tea gardens round London. They were considered very good for weakly people. Asses' milk was also a great specific in illness especially for consumptives. Mrs. Cibber, we are told by her daughter, "drank every morning and night asses' milk. I observed," she says, "one of those little health resorting animals was attended by its foal, which was about the height of a sizable greyhound." The ass was always brought to the customer's door and milked there. If real asses' milk could not be obtained, and good milking asses were not common, Mrs. Glass could inform the public how to make "artificial asses' milk."

"Take," she says, "two ounces of pearl barley, two large

spoonfuls of hartshorn shavings, one ounce of eringo, one ounce of China root, one ounce of preserved ginger, eighteen snails bruised with shells, to be boiled in three quarts of water, till it comes to three pints, then boil a pint of new milk, mix it with the rest, and put two ounces of balsam of Tolu. Take half a pint in the morning and half a pint at night."

Beer was the national drink of England, and though for a time gin threatened to take its place, it never became so universally popular. It was computed that in 1786, 1,178,856 barrels of strong beer were brewed in London by the principal brewers. This does not include small beer, which was fobbed off upon servants and schoolchildren to their general disgust, or the amount of malt liquor which was brewed by the small brewer and the publican. We are told by Pennant that in 1795,

"Mr. Meux of Liquorpond Street, Gray's Inn Lane, can shew twenty four tuns, containing in all 3,500 barrels of wholesome liquor, which enabled the London porter drinker to undergo tasks which ten gin drinkers would sink under."

Port was another beverage which was consumed in vast quantities. As a result of the Methuen Treaty in 1703 that wine came into the country almost free from duty. It cost as little as 1s. 4d. a quart, and was a very strong, heady wine. Canary could be bought at 8s a gallon. The drier kinds of Canary were known as sack, which was a word derived from the French sec and applied to several kinds of dry white wine. There was Canary sack, Madeira sack, Sherry sack and Palm sack. Lisbon is a wine hardly ever seen in these days. It was much drunk in the eighteenth century, and was a Portuguese sherry. Mead was a home-made drink, but it was served in taverns and pleasure-gardens. Sir Roger de Coverley, we may remember, was shocked by "a wanton baggage" at Spring Gardens, who asked him to drink a bottle of mead with her. It was compounded of honey, water, ginger and elder flowers, all boiled together, yeast being added when cool. Then there were all the punches, rum punch, gin punch, brandy punch, milk punch, and quack

punch, which was made by adding two pods of sweet tamarinds to each bowl. Rum fustian was made of a quart of strong beer, a pint of gin, a bottle of sherry and twelve eggs, with nutmeg, lemon and sugar.

By the eighteenth century the heavy English breakfast of beef and beer had begun to go out of fashion. Swift complained of having to eat, "a monstrous breakfast of cold beef, mutton, neats tongues, venison pasty and stale beer," but the family with which he was staying were heavy eaters. It was more usual to substitute tea and coffee for beer, and such light viands as oysters or cold tongue for beef and pasties. Madam de Bocage tells us of a breakfast-party to which she was invited during her stay in England. There was "a long table covered with the finest linen . . . coffee, chocolate, biscuits, butter, toast and exquisite tea." There is no mention of anything more substantial. Indeed, the man or woman of fashion, who had been amusing themselves all night, seldom took more than a cup of chocolate for breakfast. Tea was regarded by many people as most deleterious. Jonas Hanway inveighed against it in season and out. "There is not quite so much beauty in the land as there was," he says, "your very chambermaids have lost their bloom by sipping tea." According to Lettsom only the very robust could drink tea with impunity. Others found themselves "fluttered and shaky after a tea breakfast." Many persons eschewed it altogether, and substituted sage tea, which was said to have many excellent qualities.

"Strong sage tea and sage wine drank in quantities" was highly recommended.

Of luncheon or beaver very little was eaten. Even when the dinner grew to be as late as six o'clock our ancestors seldom took more than a glass of wine and a biscuit in the middle of the day. Sometimes they would go out to a tavern, drink a bottle of wine and eat some radishes with bread and butter. John Byrom, who was an abstemious man, would take a friend to an eating house and order three pints of sherry and 6*d.* worth of chestnuts. Others supported life on egg

## LARGE BILLS AND DINNERS

flip. The running footmen found it very sustaining, and the weary traveller was regaled with it when he alighted at an inn.

Dinner was the meal of the day, and when we remember that a hungry man might have eaten nothing but bread and butter and a few snacks, it is not surprising that he needed a heavy meal. The amount of meat which was consumed filled foreigners with amazement. When Pitt was living at Downing Street, his butcher's bill for a month was £96. This was thought excessive. Mutton might cost 5*d.* a pound in London and beef and veal 4½*d.*, so it is obvious that even the Prime Minister's large household could not have consumed this vast amount. People who lived carefully, however, provided very large dinners. King George III might be contented with leg of mutton and gooseberry pie; but his well-to-do subjects preferred the kind of meal which Maria Allen describes to Fanny Burney.

"Tell Jenny," she says, "I have altered the dinner on Monday, and intend having at top fry'd smelts at bottom ham, on one side two boiled chickens, on the other a small pigeon pie with three pigeons in it, and let the crust be made very rich and eggs in it—in the middle a orleon plumb pudding, and a roast loin of mutton after the fish. There must be French beans round the chickens, and let her get some green gages and filberts, and a few good orleans for after dinner."

Catherine Hutton tells us of a Sunday dinner, which consisted of salmon, served with fennel sauce, melted butter, lemon pickle and soy. There was also a roast loin of veal, and a hot pigeon pie with the yolks of eggs in it, chicken and ham and a currant tart. When the cloth was removed for dessert, according to custom, gooseberries, currants, and a melon were put upon the table, together with wine and cider. The ladies left the room after the first toast had been drunk. Dinner was followed by tea, not as coffee follows dinner at the present time, but an hour or two afterwards when the gentlemen had finished their potations. In many houses this

## FOOD, DRINK AND THE HOUSEHOLD

was the last meal eaten in the day. At others, less frugal, a hearty supper was eaten at seven or eight o'clock or later, and among the working classes who dined at twelve or one a supper was a necessity. It was not generally as heavy or elaborate as a dinner. Cold meat and radishes were often eaten, or if guests were expected, some sweetbreads, veal olives or cutlets. Doctors inveighed against the supper habit, and after a heavy meal at five or six cold meat at nine or ten does not sound wholesome. Fish was a favourite supper dish, and a great variety of fish was eaten. Pike and tench were often served with port wine sauce or stuffed with a pudding inside. Sturgeon could be bought in fishmongers' shops, though by a decree of Edward II all English sturgeons were the property of the King. Perhaps his Majesty did not always fancy the fish. At any rate we hear of their being eaten by his subjects, and Mrs. Glass gives recipes for cooking the fish. "The common porpesses," we are told, "frequently run up the Thames in numbers, and afford an eager diversion to the watermen." We do not know if they ate them; but it is quite probable. Mrs. Glass does not mention them, though she tells us how to pot lampreys, which also came up the river, to broil weavers and to make mussel soup.

We have said that meat was, to our ideas, very cheap; but when we compute eighteenth-century prices, we must always remember the value of money. Fivepence at the beginning of the century was probably equal to 1s. 2d. or 1s. 3d. nowadays and at the end of our period about 10d. or 1s. The following list of household expenses was given in the *London Advertiser* in 1786. It is obviously a middle-class budget, and is for a household consisting of a man and wife, four children and two maids.

	£	s.	d.
Bread for 8 persons at 8d. a week . . . .	5	4	
Butter, 1 lb. a day at 9d. . . . .	5	3	
Cheese, 3½ lbs. at 5d. . . . .	1	5½	
Roots, Herbs, Spices and Decoraments for the table			6
Meat, fish or fowl, 1 lb. for each person per day .	1	8	0
Milk and cream at 2d. a day . . . . .	1	2	



# PRICES OF FOOD AND DRINK

	£	s.	d.
Eggs 4 <i>d.</i> , and flour 1 <i>s.</i> 2 <i>d.</i> . . . . .		1	6
Small beer at 14 <i>s.</i> . . . . .		4	8
12 gallons consumed . . . . .		5	0
Candles (summer and winter), 4lbs. at 9 <i>d.</i> . . . .		3	0
Coals, 2 fires in winter, 1 in summer . . . . .		5	6
Soap, blue, starch and washing . . . . .		1	9
Thread, needles, tapes, etc. . . . .		1	9
Sand, Fullers earth, whitening, scouring paper, black dust, small coal . . . . .			11
Repair of furniture, etc. . . . .			2

The meat, fish and fowl seem to have been dear, according to eighteenth-century standards, and certainly a great deal of it was eaten; 56 lb. a week is enormous. On the other hand only 6*d.* a week is spent on vegetables. The Londoner did not eat many of these, indeed there was an idea that they were unwholesome. Grosley certainly speaks of London vegetables with great disgust. They were grown in the market gardens round the metropolis, and were impregnated with the smoke of many chimneys. Their bitter taste was often imparted to the meat with which they were boiled.

When the cheapest tea was 6*s.* or 8*s.* a pound, it is obvious that a weekly allowance of 2*s.* provided very little. The servants would have been given the used tea-leaves, if they got any at all, and the children would have been put off with very small beer, or with milk and water rather the consistency of Mr. Squeers's, we imagine.

The market price of mutton from 1706 till 1730 was 2½*d.* a pound, from 1730 to 1760 it was 3*d.*, and beef and veal were a ½*d.* or so cheaper. Milk was 1*d.* a quart, butter was 6*d.* or 7*d.* a pound, cheese was 4*d.* and potatoes were 10*d.* a bushel. A chicken could be bought for 6*d.* or 8*d.*, a goose for 2*s.* 6*d.*, and eggs were sometimes as little as 2*d.* a dozen.<sup>1</sup> Bread varied in price as wheat rose and fell. Arthur Young, the agriculturalist, speaks with bitterness of the system of stopping the export of corn and so lowering the price, "upon every mob which infests the streets."

In 1715 wheat was 32*s.* a quarter, and bread cost 1*d.* a

<sup>1</sup> Retail prices in London would be considerably higher.

pound. At the end of the century, in those lean war years, the quartern loaf was costing 1s. 3d. Bread and tea had then become the staple food of the very poor. In their miserable rooms, cooking was almost impossible and probably the only hot meal which the working man ever tasted was the Sunday dinner that he fetched from the baker. In Hogarth's plate "Noon," we see the boy who has bumped the plate of hot viands too violently upon the iron street post, with the result that it is broken in pieces. While the boy gives himself over to lamentation a little girl crouched upon the cobbled street is eating up the remains of the meal.

If the poor had to put up with baked meats the well-to-do certainly did not. Their meat was always roasted in front of the fire. In Rowlandson's picture of the Inn Kitchen we see the joint in front of the great fire rotating on a round iron bar fixed in a wheel. This wheel is turned by an unhappy dog, imprisoned in a round cage. Sometimes the spit was turned by the scullion or it was fitted with weights which could be wound up. The joint was carefully basted in its own dripping. Upon the fire in Rowlandson's picture is an immense copper for boiling water. This supplied all the ablutionary needs of the household as well as water for cleaning and washing up. No wonder our ancestors did not have many baths. In some houses there was no copper, but a great kettle hung on one of those saw-like hangers, which might have been seen in mediæval kitchens. The kettle had a clever contrivance by which it could be tilted when the hot water was poured out. Other pots and pans were hung from similar hangers. A brick oven for bread would be at the side of the fire. This sort of kitchen was almost universal in the country; but in London where space was more confined, a different kind of fire was sometimes provided. The oven which had to be filled with sticks and brushwood was a difficulty in a large town, where quantities of such fuel were not easily obtained. The housewife began to buy her bread from the baker, though she probably protested as loudly as Mr. Bramble about its deleterious qualities. Some people cooked on char-

coal fires, and this was no doubt cleaner and easier than cooking on open hearths of wood or coal, but the fumes of the charcoal were very unhealthy. At the end of the seventeenth century, John Evelyn went to supper with several other members of the Royal Society and their meal was cooked on a "digester." This was a kind of large saucepan with divisions into which the viands were placed, and the whole was covered with an air-tight lid. Less than half a pound of coal was needed to cook the supper.

In 1780 Thomas Robinson invented a kitchen fire which was the first of the ranges which were so popular throughout the nineteenth century. It had an oven at the side, and the fire could be made larger or smaller by an ingenious device.

Let us now come up from the basement, and see something of the rest of the house. People who lived in enormous palaces in the country called the London houses mean and pokey; to our ideas, they are spacious and well proportioned. They had often fine carvings and panelling, and the staircases were very beautiful. With that zeal for destruction so characteristic of our age, a large number of beautiful eighteenth-century houses have been pulled down in London. Enough remain, however, to show us what they could be. The most delightful of all are the few specimens of Queen Anne architecture which remain with us. Later in the century, architects began to design large residences in the Palladian style, and even lesser houses were designed in that manner. The comfort and solidity of the buildings reflected something of the spaciousness of English life among the well-to-do. There were, of course, exceptions. Horace Walpole, with his Strawberry Hill Gothic, was a pioneer of the romantic movement, but this style, which we now think quaint and rather amusing, was not at all general and had certainly few examples in London.

Rents of houses varied in accordance with the locality. Mrs. Vickers, writing to Lord Fermanagh, says, "I have gott a house in Bow Street neare Saint Katarans at Number 21. They have all little gardens to 'Em and in a clene street," for

this she paid £18 a year, which was very cheap. In Bloomsbury about £50 a year was charged for houses, and in the new squares in the West End as much as £150.

The South Kensington Museum has many beautiful specimens of eighteenth-century furniture. There we may see Hepplewhite, Sheraton and Chippendale in all their glory. Architects themselves did not disdain furniture design, and Kent's and Adams's work may be seen in some of our greatest houses. The masters originated various styles and designs, which were copied by their pupils and by lesser men. No doubt much of the furniture which is now labelled Hepplewhite or Sheraton was the work of other craftsmen. When the duty upon imported wood was lowered, mahogany began to take the place of walnut, cherry and oak. Doors and banisters were made of some polished wood, at least in the principal rooms in good houses. The mantelpieces were of marble, fine plaster-work, or even of Wedgwood pottery. There were, of course, fashions in furniture then as there are in these days. There was the craving for everything Chinese, Chinese wallpaper, lacquered beds and other furniture, Chinese porcelain—a very beautiful fashion. Then there was the feather craze, which Cowper commemorated in his verses to Mrs. Montagu.

The birds put forth their every hue  
To dress a room for Montagu  
The peacock sends his heavenly dies  
His rainbow and his starry eyes  
The pheasant plumes which round unfold  
His mantling neck with downy gold  
The cock his arched tails azure show  
And river blanch'd the swan his snow  
All tribes besides of Indian name  
That glossy shine or vivid flame.

By the beginning of the eighteenth century carpets were part of the furnishings of all well-to-do households, and many of them came from Turkey and Persia. Poor people still strewed their floors with sand or rushes, and even in good houses children and servants had rushes on their bedroom

floors. The four-post bed of an earlier time still survived. It was snug and comfortable and kept out the night air, which was thought to be so dangerous. The half-tester bed was, however, coming in, and hardy people who wished to be in the fashion ventured to sleep in it. Children and servants were put off with low, curtainless beds; but then it was well known that they never took cold, or if they did it was a matter of no consequence. The curtains of four-post and half-tester beds were often made of heavy woollen materials, and they were sometimes embroidered by the ladies of the family. Later in the century, when cotton materials had become the fashion, bed furnishings were often of chintz. Every year in careful households, these beds would be taken to pieces and washed in vinegar and water. Even so bugs were endemic in many London houses. Mrs. Glass tells her readers, "How to keep clear of Buggs" which apparently could only be done by burning brimstone over a charcoal fire. Mattresses were made of feathers, generally those of the domestic fowl, though "super-fine seasoned swans feathers" could be bought at about half a crown a pound. The silver, china and stone ware of our ancestors' dinner tables were very beautiful. At the beginning of the century only rich people possessed silver. Indeed, when the plate tax was first levied it was found that many quite well-to-do people did not possess any plate at all. In 1776 when a form was sent to John Wesley, asking for a list of all the plate he possessed, his answer was as follows,

"SIR,

I have two silver teaspoons in London and two at Bristol. This is all the plate which I have at present, and I shall not buy any more while so many around me want bread.

Your most humble servant,

JOHN WESLEY."

At the date when this letter was written, silver plate and silver tea equipages, as our ancestors called them, were in pretty general use among the well-to-do. Other people contented themselves with pewter, and the poor, if they ate off anything,

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had trenchers or wooden bowls and cups made of oak or sycamore. Forks had been introduced into England about the year 1632, and by the eighteenth century they were in fairly general use. They were two or three pronged and were made of steel.

“Silver forks,” says Mrs. Papendick, in her *Court and Private Life of Queen Charlotte*, were only used by the nobility and foreign ambassadors; but silver handled knives and forks were sometimes seen, and more often ivory or bone handles, or ebony fluted with silver ferrules. Forks had still only three prongs, so knives were made with broad ends for eating peas in summer, and the same of a smaller size for catching up the juice of a fruit pie, dessert spoons being quite unknown in our rank.”

It was said that Queen Anne had a fixed bath in her dressing-room in St. James's Palace, and also a marble basin with a tap. This, though of course only a cold bath, was an almost unheard of luxury. If people had baths at all they were tin tubs. There were some of these which had receptacles underneath, into which live coal or charcoal could be put to heat the water above. Cowper's friend, the woollen draper, had a cold bath which he promised to lend him in the winter together with the *St. James's Chronicle*. Cowper expressed himself as duly grateful; but most of our ancestors did without baths, or went to one of the bagnios or public baths which London provided. Swift spoke of the dirty condition of his contemporaries; but Swift had a dirty mind. It is quite possible, as everyone knows, to be perfectly clean without ever taking a bath. As the century advanced, the standard of cleanliness improved, though there was a Duke of Norfolk towards the end of our period who could only be washed when he was quite drunk.

## LITERATURE, ART AND MUSIC

TO write anything approaching a history of eighteenth-century literature would be impossible, and quite out of place in a book of this description. We can only touch upon its chief characteristics, and judge, if we can, how it was affected by the life of eighteenth-century London.

The education of the upper classes, as we have said in another chapter, had deteriorated. The fine scholarship, which was the characteristic of the sixteenth-century gentleman, was rare in the eighteenth, and learning among women was generally derided. From the Augustan age of Anne till 1795 when Wordsworth and Coleridge published *Lyrical Ballads*, an immense amount of fine literature was produced, but very little of it was in the first rank. There was no Chaucer or Shakespeare, no Milton, Keats or Shelley. The poets whom our eighteenth-century forbears most delighted in, we do not think the best. Pope, though he is now emerging a little from obscurity, is not considered to be in the first rank. In his age and for some time after he was reckoned to be one of the finest of English poets. After the Authorised Version of the Bible, and Shakespeare, more phrases of his have been taken into everyday use than any other writer's. "His *Essay on Criticism*, if he had written nothing else, would have placed him among the first critics and the first poets," says Dr. Johnson, who does not uniformly praise him.

Gray, Collins, Blake, Goldsmith, Cowper and Christopher Smart are still read, but no one now enthuses over Macpherson, or takes Young's *Night Thoughts* to bed. Shenstone and Akenside, Glover, Churchill, Thompson and a score or two more are seldom read except by students. Beattie's *Min-*

*strel* was thought remarkably fine, with its description of the infant Edwin :

And yet poor Edwin was no vulgar boy  
 Deep thought oft seemed to fix his infant eye  
 Dainties he heeded not, nor gaud nor toy,  
 Save one short pipe of rudest minstrelsy.  
 Silent when glad, affectionate though shy  
 And now his look was most demurely sad,  
 And now he laughed aloud, yet none knew why,  
 And neighbours stared and sighed, yet blessed the lad,  
 Some deemed him wondrous wise, and some believed him mad.

In poetry, with a few fine exceptions, the eighteenth century did not excel. Poetry does not thrive in a society which is engrossed in making itself rich and comfortable.

A new book-buying public was emerging in London, and a more or less educated middle class. The circulation of books was largely confined to the metropolis. This may in some measure account for the lack of fine poetical descriptions of nature in eighteenth-century literature. There was a gentleman who said he preferred the smell of a flambeau in St. James's Street to the violets and sweet briar of the countryside. Johnson would certainly have agreed with him, and so would a large number of the wits and men of letters.

Women were beginning to form a considerable portion of the reading public. They had more money and leisure, and some of them began to read and buy books. There is an amusing account in the *Spectator* of the library which had been collected by Leonora, "whose reading has lain very much among romances." She possessed Ogleby's *Virgil*, Dryden's *Juvenal*, *Cassandra*, *Cleopatra*, *Astræa*, Sir Isaac Newton's works, the *Grand Cyrus*, with a pin stuck in one of the middle leaves, Pembroke's *Arcadia*, Locke on *Human Understanding*, with a paper of patches in it, a spelling book, a dictionary for the spelling of hard words, Sherlock upon *Death*, Sir William Temple's *Essays*, Father Malbranche's *Search after Truth*, translated into English, a book of novels, *The Academy of Compliments*, Culpepper's *Midwifery*, *The Ladies Calling*, *Tales*



*in Verse* by Mr. Dursey, bound in red leather, gilt on the back, and doubled down in several places. All the Classic authors in wood, a set of Elzevers by the same hand. *Clelia* which opened of itself in the place that describes two lovers in a bower, Baker's *Chronicle*, *Advice to a Daughter*, the *New Atlantis*, with key to it, Mr. Steele's *Christian Hero*, a Prayer-book with a bottle of Hungary Water by the side of it. Dr. Sacheverell's *Speech*, Fielding's *Trial*, Seneca's *Morals*, Taylor's *Holy Living and Dying* and La Ferte's *Instructions for Country Dances*. The Lady also possessed *The fifteen comforts of Matrimony*, which was particularly appropriate as she had been unfortunate in her marriage.

Steele and Addison wrote largely for women and their papers were immensely popular. Women, too, were patrons of the novel. Men might read Fielding and Smollett, and some of the more robust novels, but Richardson and his imitators and the romantic school of Horace Walpole, "Monk" Lewis and Mrs. Radcliffe owed much of their popularity to women. The eighteenth century, as we know, was the period when the English novel took form and lived. It had its many detractors, and women were always being reproached for reading it. To our thinking the output of fiction was remarkably small. In 1771, which was considered a good year, only about sixty novels were reviewed, and some of these were reprints and translations. A popular book would certainly sell in large numbers—in very large numbers, we may say, when we consider the smallness of the population. Richardson's *Pamela* ran through five editions in a year. The success of *Evelina* was astonishing.

The verdict of the critic began to take the place of the opinion of the wits, and as criticism was published and could be read, books received a great advertisement.

After the novel, and not far behind it in popularity, came the sermon or religious work. Lackington the bookseller stocked ten thousand copies of Watt's Psalms and the same number of his Hymns. Law's *Serious Call* had a large sale and its effect upon the religious life of the century was very

great. It was said that two million of Hannah Moore's tracts sold in a year.

What, for want of a better name, has been called the romantic revival was exemplified in the works of "Monk" Lewis and Mrs. Radcliffe, the translation of the *Arabian Nights* and the many imitations of these works. There are always men and women who crave for an escape from the everyday life which they see around them. In cities the craving for this is more intense. A few men satisfied it by reading the fine nature poems of Gray and Collins or Blake's *Songs of Innocence*, others delighted in the *Percy Reliques*. As early as the reign of Anne, the *Spectator* was praising the ballad of *Chevy Chase*. Macpherson's *Ossian* and Chatterton's forgeries were immensely popular, and Walpole's *Castle of Otranto* was actually written as a sort of skit on the romantic novel.

After the novel and the sermon perhaps the pamphlet had the largest circulation in early eighteenth-century London. Any man who had a grievance, who wished to tilt at abuses, or to obtain notoriety could write a pamphlet and get it printed without much expense. The political parties used this form of publication extensively, and there were even shops which were largely devoted to their sale. "Sold at the pamphlet shops of London and Westminster" was often to be found on the title pages of these productions.

As the century advanced the education of the young was gaining popular support, and about the middle of the century John Newbery began to publish books for children. For a long time there had been the chap-books, or chapman's books, which the pedlar brought round in his pack. Children no doubt delighted in such tales as *Guy Earl of Warwick*, *Death and the Lady Margaret's Ghost*, *Valentine and Orson*, and the *Seven Champions of Christendom*. Some would read *Robinson Crusoe* or the *Pilgrim's Progress*, or *Gulliver's Travels*. Newbery, however, began to write and publish little books in gilt bindings on purpose for children. There was *Giles Gingerbread* and *Mrs. Margaret Twoshoes* and *Tommy Trip and his dog Jowler* and Goldsmith's *History of England*. *Sandford and*

*Merton* began to come out in parts in 1783, and from then onwards there was a perfect spate of children's books. They were all highly moral, but then the poetry and novels of the century were inclined to be didactic.

We have been considering the books which were read by the educated classes; but the poor, who had been taught to read in the Sunday Schools, began to look out for books for themselves. The chap-books appealed to them strongly. There was the *History of Parisimius and Perisimenes*, which Thomas Holcroft borrowed from his father's apprentice. There was the old ballad of the *Two Children in the Wood*, which Mr. Spectator found pasted on the walls of a room, and which he read with so much pleasure in spite of "such an abject phrase and poorness of expression."

It was the custom in ale houses and sometimes in the houses of the poor, to paper the walls with old ballads and stories. As men sat over their beer someone would read aloud the ballad of the *Blind Beggar's Daughter of Bethnal Green* or *King Charles's Golden Rules*. According to Lackington the poor also read the novels of Fielding and Richardson, and some of them would pick up odd volumes of the poets which were sold at a halfpenny or a penny on the bookstalls.

Dr. Johnson described the author's lot as one of "toil, envy, want, the garret, and the jail." With the exception of the gaol, he certainly experienced these things for himself, but his life also largely illustrated the change in the position of the author. In the early days of the century he was either a Grub Street hack, the drudge of the booksellers, liable to imprisonment or the pillory, or else he was taken up by some great man, given a deanery, or made Secretary of State. This state of affairs did not last. Goldsmith lamented the time when dinner with a patron procured a man invitations for the whole week following and "an airing in his patron's chariot supplied him with a citizen's coach on every future occasion." "A jockey or a laced player," Goldsmith found, "supplies the place of the scholar, poet or the man of virtue."

Johnson, however, with his sturdy independence had

nothing good to say about patrons. The bookseller, he thought, was the best Mæcenas.

As the population of London increased there was a larger demand for books, and the publisher, or the bookseller, as he was called in those days, was able to pay higher prices. Quite ordinary works fetched good sums. Dr. Hawkesworth received £6,000 for his *Voyages*, David Mallet refused £2,000 for Bolingbroke's *Philosophical Works*, while Chamberlain's publishers gave him £500 when the sale of his dictionary exceeded their expectations. It is not surprising that *Tom Jones* should have been sold for £600. It had such a great sale that Miller, the bookseller, presented Fielding with another £100 as a present.

There were several libraries in the metropolis. The Cotton and Sloane libraries were housed in the British Museum, and could be used, though it was not easy to get a reader's ticket. Dr. Williams, a presbyterian minister, who died in 1716, had accumulated a great library of twenty-five thousand volumes chiefly on religious subjects. He left all these books for the use of Londoners, and his collection in Red Cross Street was open to the public by ticket. This library still exists. Another Dr. Williams, who was Dean of Westminster, generously threw open his library to the public every day from nine till twelve and from two till four.

These were the only libraries open to the general public. A scholar of eminence could no doubt have obtained permission to read in the Royal Society's Library or to consult books in the libraries of Westminster or St. Paul's. The learned professions had their own books, and Doctor's Commons possessed a large collection. This was added to whenever a new bishop was consecrated, as each prelate was expected to make a substantial gift to the library.

The sale of books was no doubt much increased by the circulating libraries. One of the earliest of these was that opened in 1740 by a bookseller in the Strand called Batho. By the end of the century there were twenty-two of these libraries in London. They were much abused and called

"the slop shops of literature," and other unpleasant things. "A man," says Honeycombe in the elder Colman's play, "might as well turn his daughter loose in Covent Garden as trust the cultivation of her mind to the circulating library."

No doubt, like their successors at the present day, they had to cater for all tastes, and supply a vast amount of rubbish, but that they had a great effect upon the culture and education of the day cannot be denied. At first the booksellers were nervous of them and thought that they would have a bad effect on the book trade; but they soon found that their fears were groundless, and that they were the means of increasing sales.

There were quite a number of booksellers in London. The names of Jacob Tonson, Bernard Lintot at the Cross Keys and Cushion, Robert Dodsley of Pall Mall, and Cadell & Davies in Fleet Street were famous. Then there was the Minerva press, which usually turned out novels. Many of these, as our ancestors disgustingly complained, were written by women, and were consequently quite worthless. The desire to write seemed to have afflicted quite a number of the female sex, whose education had not always fitted them for the task.

"Four hundred and seventy-three novels," says *The Times* of 1796, "are now in the press from the pens of young ladies of fashion. At Miss D.'s school all the young ladies write novels in the fourth classe and those whose parents are rich and honourable are at the expense of printing them."

In the Copyright Act of 1709 it was enacted that if anyone considered the price of a book too high, he could go to the Archbishop of Canterbury and complain about it. The Archbishop might, if he saw fit, reduce the price of the work, and booksellers were then obliged to part with it at that sum, or be fined £5 for every copy which exceeded it. There does not seem to have been any particular reason for such an Act, beyond the natural desire of the bibliophile to pick up books cheap, and apparently it was never more than a dead letter.

Books could be both expensive and also extraordinarily cheap. In the early days of the century a new quarto volume

might cost 12s., an octavo 8s. 6d. and a duodecimo 3s. Towards the end of the century the price had increased considerably. On the other hand it was possible to pick up books for next to nothing. Byrom tells us how he "called at a by-book-sellers and bought four books, the *Antiquities of China*, *Human Reason*, the *Right Teaching of Useful Knowledge*, and *Edmund Willis his shorthand*, which cost in all 1s. 2d." Lackington would never destroy remainders as other book-sellers were in the habit of doing. If a book were not worth 6s., he said it might fetch three or two.

"Went to Bateman the bookseller," writes Swift in the journal to Stella, and laid out eight and forty shillings for books. I bought three little volumes of Lucian in French for our Stella." This Bateman was a curious man. His shop was frequented by the lovers of old and rare books, but he never allowed any of them to be looked into. People, particularly physicians and authors, he said, were quite capable of tearing out recipes and quotations and ruining a valuable work.

If English literature flourished in the eighteenth century, so to an even greater degree did English art. After Marlborough's wars the Continent was open to English travellers, and the Grand Tour became popular. As we have said in another chapter, many a young man wasted his time as completely abroad as he did at home; but others returned with a new knowledge and a real taste for art. In 1734 the Dilettanti Club was founded. According to Horace Walpole, the qualifications for membership were drunkenness and a visit to Italy, but many a man who joined became the patron of artists, and a collector of rare and beautiful things.

The status and rewards of the painter varied enormously. Sir Joshua Reynolds said that he would have entered upon the profession of an apothecary rather than have been an ordinary artist. The ordinary artist sometimes made a fair living by a good deal of hack work. He was nearly always a portrait painter, for in an age before photography there was a steady demand for portraits. Most persons of means had themselves painted at least once in their lives. If the painter

got as much as five guineas for a full-length portrait he thought he was very well paid. Sir Joshua Reynolds got five guineas each for his pictures of Dr. John Mudge and a young lady in Devonshire. Romney charged two guineas for a half-length, and six guineas for a whole, while Gainsborough asked eight guineas. We are speaking, of course, of the painters' early days. When Sir Joshua Reynolds was President of the Royal Academy and had a hundred and fifty sitters in a year, he got as much as two hundred pounds for a whole-length portrait, and Walpole says that he received a thousand pounds for his picture of the Ladies Waldegrave. Gainsborough charged a hundred and Romney a hundred and twenty guineas. Poor Richard Wilson complained that his principal customers were pawnbrokers. One of his pictures, probably Sion House from Richmond, was offered to the Court. Lord Bute looked at it, and considered that the price asked for it, sixty guineas for a mere landscape, was enormous. Wilson said that if the King could not afford sixty guineas all at once, he was quite willing to take it in instalments.

Sir Joshua Reynolds lived like a gentleman in his fine house in Leicester Fields. He had an income of five or six thousand a year, and a carved and gilded chariot with painted panels, in which his sister took the air. He was a member of Almack's and was honoured and fêted everywhere. When he died he was carried to his last resting-place in St. Paul's, and some of the greatest nobles in the land were his pall-bearers. He owed his position chiefly, no doubt, to his incomparable genius, but also partly to his fine character, and the kindness and charm of his manners.

Gainsborough never did so well. He lived, he told his sister, "at a full thousand a year expense" and he kept a chariot for a short time. He lived in London as did nearly all the great painters of the century, but his heart was in the Suffolk landscape. "There was not," he said, "a picturesque clump of trees, nor even a tree of any beauty, no, nor hedge-row, stem or post" round his beloved Sudbury that he had not remembered from his earliest childhood.

The London art patron did not care about pictures of the countryside. Gainsborough left forty unsold landscapes when he died. Richard Wilson lived in great poverty. What the eighteenth century really admired were portraits, great allegorical groups, and copies from the Italian Masters. Romney refused £100 from the Duke of Richmond for his copy of Raphael's "Transfiguration." Walpole in a letter to George Montagu tells him how he had bought "two sweet children undoubtedly by Sir Peter Lely" for four pounds ten and a fine Vandyke for twenty-nine guineas.

The art of the previous age was not greatly admired, nor did the great painters of the day always escape criticism. Cumberland took Garrick to see Romney's work. He had just finished

"a large family piece . . . a gentleman in a close buckled bob wig with his wife and children (some sitting, some standing) . . . they were perfectly amused in a contented abstinence from all thought and action. 'Upon my word, sir,' said Garrick, 'that is a very regular, well ordered family, and that is a very bright well rubbed mahogany table at which that motherly good lady is sitting, and that worthy gentleman in the scarlet waistcoat is doubtless a very excellent subject to the state, I mean if all these are his children, but not for your art Mr. Romney, if you mean to pursue it with that success which I hope will attend you.'"

After that criticism Romney turned his family with their faces to the wall.

The great Hogarth was called an ingenious inventor by the cognoscenti of the day. His *Marriage à la Mode* only fetched £120.

The Royal Academy was founded in 1768 with Sir Joshua Reynolds as the first president. Before that date there were various art exhibitions in London. There was the Society of Arts to which Gainsborough contributed eighteen of his works. It had its first exhibition of English painters in 1760 in its large rooms in the Strand. Next year, owing to a division among its members, it split into two associations, one of



which called itself the Free Society of Artists, and had a house in Spring Gardens. The other was known as the Incorporated Society of Artists. Johnson wrote a preface for the catalogue of the Spring Gardens Exhibition in 1762.

George III, who was a patron of the arts, was much interested in the founding of the Academy. It was at first housed in Pall Mall. There, as it was formed "for the purpose of cultivating and improving the arts of painting, sculpture and architecture," it set up its school, and Sir Joshua Reynolds gave the first of his discourses. In 1775 Somerset House was purchased by the executive and here the Royal Academy established itself. It must have been a fine building. Reynolds, Cipriani and Angelica Kaufman painted its ceilings. All the great artists of the day exhibited there, with the exception of Gainsborough, who owing, it is supposed, to a quarrel with Reynolds took himself off elsewhere. Here at Somerset House were exhibited some of the exquisite water colours which were such a feature of English Art in the eighteenth century. In the early years of our period water-colour painting, which was almost a forgotten art, was introduced into England. Paul Sandby was the first who really painted in this medium, though it had been used previously for tinting pen or pencil drawings. He was followed timidly at first by a few artists, and then towards the end of the century there was a spate of wonderful pictures by such men as Cozens, Girtin, Cotman and Turner. It was an art which commended itself to the amateur. The boarding school miss, who had hesitated to embark on oils, found that she could now buy these new paints from the Guild of Colour men who were making them. Water colours were clean and easily handled and they became immensely popular. Many of these efforts were contemptible, but some exquisite paintings have come down to us.

It is interesting to notice that the exhibition of inn signs which has lately taken place is not the first of its kind. In 1762 a similar show was held at "the Large Rooms, in Bow Street, Covent Garden nearly opposite the play-house passage."

## LITERATURE, ART AND MUSIC

"The Society of Sign Painters," the *St. James's Chronicle* announced, "after advertising the annual exhibition for the encouragement of art, are also preparing a most magnificent collection of portraits, landscapes, fancy pieces, flower pieces, history pieces, night pieces, sea pieces, sculpture pieces, etc., etc., designed by the best hands in the Kingdoms. The Virtuosi will have a new opportunity of displaying their Taste on this occasion, by discovering the different Stile of the several Masters employed, and pointing out by what Hand each Piece is drawn. A remarkable Cognoscente who has attended at the Society's great Room, with his Glass, for several mornings, has already piqued himself on discovering the famous painter of the Rising Sun, a modern Claude Lorraine, in an elegant Nightpiece of the Man-in-the-Moon. He is also convinced that no other than the famous Artists who drew the Red Lion at Brentford can be equal to the bold figures in London Prentice, and that the exquisite Colouring in the Piece called Pyramus and Thisbe must be by the same hand as the Hole-in-the-Wall."

The various societies of artists in London were much annoyed at what they took to be a burlesque of their exhibitions, but Hogarth supported the venture and even contributed some paintings under the name of Hagarty.

As an alternative to a portrait in oils the silhouette became very popular. It was easily and quickly done, and if it took up rather more space than the beautiful miniatures which were so characteristic of eighteenth-century art, it was certainly much cheaper. Some of these silhouettes were painted and others were cut out of black paper. They did not usually cost more than a few shillings and as one artist remarked could be "sent in a letter any distance without injury." Another advertisement of the art runs as follows:

"Likenesses taken single or in groups in the genteelist taste by Torond No. 18 Well's Street, opposite Margaret Street. Drawing and painting taught at home and abroad as usual."

The glory of English painting was not reflected in architecture. Fine, dignified, comfortable houses were no doubt built, but after the age of Anne there was little in domestic

architecture that was in the first rank. Churches were usually in the Palladian style and were appropriate to the general trend of architectural fashion.

When we come to the lesser arts, however, we find a very different state of things. The Adams brothers, Hepplewhite, Sheraton and Chippendale with a host of their pupils and followers designed the furniture. The Huguenot refugees brought taste and knowledge to the making and decoration of English plate. The china works of Chelsea and Bow produced the most exquisite porcelain. The eighteenth century, indeed, was the century of the artist.

In the year 1710 Handel, who had just been offered the post of Kappelmeister to the Elector of Hanover, came to England for a visit. He brought opera to London. It was not an entirely new form of musical expression. Purcell had attempted it, and what has been described as the most perfect opera written before the time of Gluck was composed by Nahum Tate, who collaborated with Brady in composing a well-known hymn book. London thronged the Opera House in the Haymarket to listen to "Rinaldo" and the other operas which were performed there. The forty-one operas which Handel wrote are now scarcely known, though a few arias from them are still played. In their day, however, they were immensely popular, though the patriotic Addison disliked the foreign singers, and there were musical critics who thought that the Italian Buononcini was the greater composer.

Some say compared to Buononcini  
That Mynheer Handel's but a ninny  
Others aver that he to Handel  
Is scarcely fit to hold a candle,  
Strange all this difference should be  
'Twixt Tweedledum and Tweedledee.

After many difficulties and vicissitudes Handel established himself upon the throne of English music. Buononcini faded away. He had, it was said, shown up as a prize madrigal the work of another man.

Handel composed the water music which so pleased King

George I that he took him into favour, gave him four hundred a year, and eventually made him music master to the little princesses. Then Handel began to revise the choral music which had always been so popular in England and wrote the oratorios on which his fame was to rest. Six years after his death, the seven-year-old Mozart came to London. He said in the dedication of his violin sonatas to Queen Charlotte that he hoped he might become immortal like Handel and Hasse.

The musical world played the arias of Handel, crowded to his "Messiah" or his "Judas Maccabeus," acclaimed Florio, loved the music of Scarlatti, and thought that Graun and Telemann were the greatest composers of their day. John Christian Bach established himself in London, and his concerts in the Hanover Square Rooms were always crowded by the musical. Some people had even heard that his father, John Sebastian Bach, was a musician.

In this adulation of foreign composers there was some danger of English musicians being overlooked. Certainly Thomas Arne had a great following. His "Comus," which was performed at Drury Lane in 1738, was very much admired, and the music he wrote for Shakespeare's songs carried his name down to posterity. He wrote the music for the "Masque of Alfred" which contained the song "Rule Britannia." Arne's pupil, Dr. Burney, was perhaps more famous for his *History of Music* than for his "Ode for St. Cecilia's Day," though he had been made a Fellow of the Royal Society before the first volume of his history appeared. William Boyce, the Master of the King's Music, was considered a very great ecclesiastical composer. His grave is under the dome of St. Paul's. It was, however, very generally considered that the career of a musician was a very poor thing. Arne's father, the upholsterer, was bitterly disappointed when his son insisted on being a musician rather than an attorney. "Do you want to make a fiddler of the boy?" said Thomas Holcroft's shoemaker uncle, when there was some talk of his taking up music as a profession. "My father's pride," added Holcroft, "took the alarm."

## POPULAR MUSIC

The Italian operas of Handel and his imitators did not monopolise the London concert stage. There were the delightful "Beggar's Opera," "Polly," and a number of others. Gay's works were of course social and political satires, as well as skits upon the Italian opera. They were immensely popular, though there were superior musical critics who affected to despise them. Ordinary people loved them, as they embodied some of the old English songs. They have been described as a hotch-potch of French, Italian and English airs, with bits of Purcell and Handel introduced here and there. It is, however, a hotch-potch which has lasted for two centuries. These classics were followed by a host of other ballad operas, introducing old English songs about hunting and poaching, the youthful lover cut off in his prime, and the gallant highwayman at Tyburn Tree.

Arne and Dibdin did much to keep alive the love of English popular music, and they were followed at a distance by the men who composed the songs for Vauxhall Gardens, and by the ballad singers who went about the streets.

The love of music seemed to have been general in eighteenth-century England. When the opera was in jeopardy a subscription of £50,000 was raised for its preservation. It would be difficult in these days to procure such a sum for any similar object. Even the princes of the House of Hanover, though they were not generally interested in the arts, seem to have liked music. George I contributed a thousand pounds to the Italian opera scheme. George II went to hear Handel at the Haymarket, while his son Prince Frederick patronised Buononcini in Lincoln's Inn Fields. Handel's anthem "When the ear heard her, it blessed her," was composed for Queen Caroline's funeral in 1737. George III delighted in the concerts of Ancient Music which were given in the King's Concert Rooms in Chapel Street. The conductor was always told to take his cue from the royal box where the King stood up beating time to the music.

Foreign opera and concert singers, as we may learn from Fanny Burney, were everywhere fêted and entertained. There

were music clubs and glee clubs, held in private houses and taverns. The improvement in musical taste was reflected in the improvement of musical instruments. In 1767 Covent Garden issued the following advertisement :

“End of Act First, Miss Brickley, a favourite song from ‘Judith’ accompanied by Mr. Dibdin on a new instrument called piano-forte.”

It is interesting to trace the evolution of the piano from the clavicordium, through the virginal, the spinet and the harpsichord. The two latter instruments were still played in the eighteenth century. Thomas Hitchcock had made great improvement on the spinet, which had originally been a virginal in a case, known sometimes as the couched harp. He made his instruments with a much wider compass and a fine keyboard. London became famous for its harpsichords. Tschudi and Jacob Kirchmann, the pupils of a famous Flemish craftsman, settled in the metropolis and under them the harpsichord became a larger, heavier instrument with stops and pedals.

Handel and Hayden played the harpsichord, and so did the youthful Mozart when he came to London in 1765. Hayden has been called the father of the English orchestra, and he certainly improved and enlarged it very much. He added to the strings, drums, and four wind instruments, six or eight wood and four brass.

John Yeoman gives a naïve description of the orchestra at Drury Lane. There were, he tells us,

“Ten violins, two French horns, four bassoons and two base files and another great in the shape of a base file, but so large as six common ones, it was two feet above the man’s head that played him, and I could hear him like thunder at a distance, or like something a jowling in the bowells of the earth.”

In those days as in these new fashions in music did not meet with approbation from everyone.

## NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES

“A LEAF of political instructions is served up every morning with tea,” said Goldsmith, and by his time the daily paper was a feature of London life.

The first English newspaper to be published every day was the *Daily Courant*, which appeared in 1702, and was soon followed by the *Post Boy*.

The age of Anne was prolific in newspapers. The Treasury with an eye to future taxation computed that in 1711 “there are published weekly about 44,000 newspapers viz. *Daily Courant*, *London Post*, *English Post*, *London Gazette*, *Postman*, *Postboy*, *Flying Post*, *Review*, and *Observer*.”

The *Review* was Defoe’s paper and when it came to an end in 1713 he published a monthly journal with the title of *Mercurius Politicus*, thus reviving the name of the old paper which Milton had edited.

The *Tatler* and the *Spectator* were founded in 1709 and 1711, and enjoyed only too short a life.

The influence of these papers can hardly be exaggerated, and after more than two centuries they are still fresh and delightful. In an age when literature was frequently evil and base the *Tatler* and the *Spectator* stood for what was pure in thought and in style. They championed the poor, the downtrodden, the debtor, the ill-used child. They claimed a wider and fuller education for women, they denounced abuses and cruelties. They cared nothing for the sneering wits of the coffee houses, for reactionaries and bigots.

Steele tells us that he served the cause of women “to the last drop of ink,” and he was equally the champion of the oppressed. The newspaper tax of 1711 killed the *Spectator*, though other worthless journals contrived to exist.

In 1710 Dr. King, the Jacobite Principal of St. Mary's Hall, Oxford, founded the *Examiner* and secured Swift as a contributor. Swift has been called "the father of the leading article," but he did not write for more than a few months. He gave it up when he obtained the Deanery of St. Patrick. The *Examiner* had, however, other brilliant contributors. Prior, Atterbury, Arbuthnot and Bolingbroke wrote for it. A number of other political journals followed, such as the *Craftsman*, the *Whig Examiner* and the *Medley*.

In spite of the Stamp Act newspapers became more numerous. The *Gentleman's Magazine* stated in 1731 that "no less than 200 half-sheets per month are thrown from the press only in London."

In 1733 the London journals included the *Daily Courant*, the *Craftsman*, *Fog's Journal*, *Mist's Journal*, the *London Journal*, the *Free Briton*, the *Grub Street Journal*, the *Weekly Register*, the *Universal Spectator*, the *Auditor*, the *Weekly Miscellany*, the *London Crier*, *Read's Journal*, the *London Evening Post*, *Œdipus or the Postman Remounted*, the *St. James' Post*, and the *London Daily Post*, later to be known as the *London Advertiser*.

Forty years later there were fifty-three newspapers circulating in London alone.

In 1750 Dr. Johnson began to edit the first number of the *Rambler*, a 2d. paper which came out twice a week.

It was an attempt to revive the non-political journal which deals with life and literature, but the venture was not a great success. The charm and gaiety of Steele and Addison were entirely lacking. Johnson wrote the whole of the ponderous thing himself, with only four contributions from outside, one of them being from Richardson. It lasted for about two years, and was then followed by such comparatively frivolous periodicals as the *Adventurer*, the *World* and the *Connoisseur*.

Johnson had contributed to the *Adventurer* but he disapproved of the other two papers, and in 1758 he began to edit the *Idler*. It hardly justifies its name, though it is less dull and boring than its predecessor. Wharton, Langton



and Sir Joshua Reynolds contributed to it and it lasted for one hundred and three numbers.

In 1762 with Churchill's aid John Wilkes began to publish the *North Briton*. It contained the most bitter attacks on the Ministry and particularly upon Lord Bute. In the following year, having received an advance copy of the King's Speech from Pitt and Temple, Wilkes published his famous no. 45, which contained a most bitter and slashing attack upon the policy of the King's Ministers.

George III chose to consider this as a personal attack and took immediate proceedings against him. Wilkes pointed in vain to the opening words of his article.

"The King's Speech," he had said, "has always been considered, by the legislature and by the public at large, as the speech of the Minister."

He was arrested upon a general warrant, which means a warrant which did not give the name of the person to be arrested, and thrown into the Tower. A month later, however, he was released on a decision of Lord Chief Justice Pratt that his arrest was a breach of privilege. The matter came up again when the House of Commons declared no. 45 of the *North Briton* to be "a seditious libel" and in 1768 when Wilkes had returned from the Continent and was standing for Middlesex, he was sentenced to a year's imprisonment and a fine of £500 for his *Essay on Women* and no. 45 of the *North Briton*.

Wilkes was a man of infamous character; but he vindicated the liberty of the press and was to do it good service again in later years.

It is impossible to enumerate the countless weekly and bi-weekly papers which were produced in London during the century.

The *Observer*, still happily with us, was founded in 1791, and the official *London Gazette* has been published on Tuesdays and Fridays since 1666.

*Lloyds List* was first issued as a weekly paper in 1726. Its editor who had published a journal known as *Lloyds News*

in the preceding century was a member of the famous house of Lloyds.

Perhaps the oldest English periodical was the *Bill of Mortality* published every week by the company of Parish Clerks. It had been established in the reign of Charles I and continued until the Registration Act of 1837 abolished the Bills of Mortality. It was sold at the Parish Clerk's Hall in London to parish clerks only, at the price of 16*d.* a quire with diseases on the back side, or 8*d.* without diseases. The clerks retailed it in their several parishes at 1*d.* each or 4*s.* for a yearly subscription. It is surprising that there should have been any demand, for even with the diseases on the back it must have been dull reading.

The oldest of the daily London newspapers which are still with us, the *Morning Post*, was established in 1772. It had then the sub-title of the *Daily Advertising Pamphlet*, and was indeed little more than a sheet of advertisements, dealing largely with State lotteries, and having eight pages measuring 12 inches by 8. After 1795 under the able editorship of Peter and Daniel Stuart it became a brilliant and popular newspaper.

*The Times* started its great career in 1785 with the name of the *Daily Universal Register*, but its title was changed three years later to the present one. Then, as now, it was published in Printing House Square under the auspices of the Walter family, and even in those early days it stood out for freedom of expression, and independence of thought.

John Walter, the first, had several clashes with a reactionary government, and even suffered fine and imprisonment in the service of his great paper. His chief offence lay in daring to suggest that the sons of George III had incurred the royal displeasure by conduct ill-befitting princes of the blood.

The *Morning Chronicle*, which lived for over ninety years, was founded by William Woodfall in 1769, and the *Morning Herald* in 1781. Henry Woodfall and his son published for many years a paper which was known as the *Public Advertiser*, the *General Advertiser*, the *London Daily Post*, and finally in 1798 the *Public Ledger*.

The *Letters* of Junius were published in this paper when it appeared as the *Public Advertiser*. They made an enormous difference to the sales, which were nearly doubled.

The mystery of the authorship was well preserved, and this, as much as the Letters themselves, conduced to the popularity of the paper.

There was certainly some kind of parliamentary reporting as early as the seventeenth century. News of what was going on was embodied in the papers, but the actual transcribing of words used in the House was first adopted by the *Gentleman's Magazine* in 1736. The publisher Edward Cave and a few friends took surreptitious notes, and reproduced them in his journal. This was held to be a breach of privilege and Cave was threatened with the rigour of the law. The reports, however, being popular with readers, Cave resolved to continue them. He published his parliamentary news with the heading of "Debates in the Senate of Lilliput" and disguised the names of the speakers under some absurd pseudonym, such as Wingul Pubrub for William Pulteney.

From 1740 to 1743 Dr. Johnson wrote the parliamentary news for this journal. He was careful, he said, not to "let the Whig dogs get the best of it." He still wrote about the senate of Lilliput and disguised the speakers' names under some sort of anagram.

Sometimes the notes brought to him from the House were so meagre that he "had nothing more communicated to him than the names of the several speakers, and the part which they had taken in the debate." The payment for contributions was never high. Thomas Holcroft received 5s. a column for what he supplied to the *Whitehall Evening Post*.

The reporter needed to be a man with a prodigious memory. There were those who could memorise a whole speech and going home could write it down verbatim. Others scribbled notes in secret in some corner of the House, and if they were detected would slip a half-guinea into the hand of the usher, who was generally quite willing to receive it. The salary of

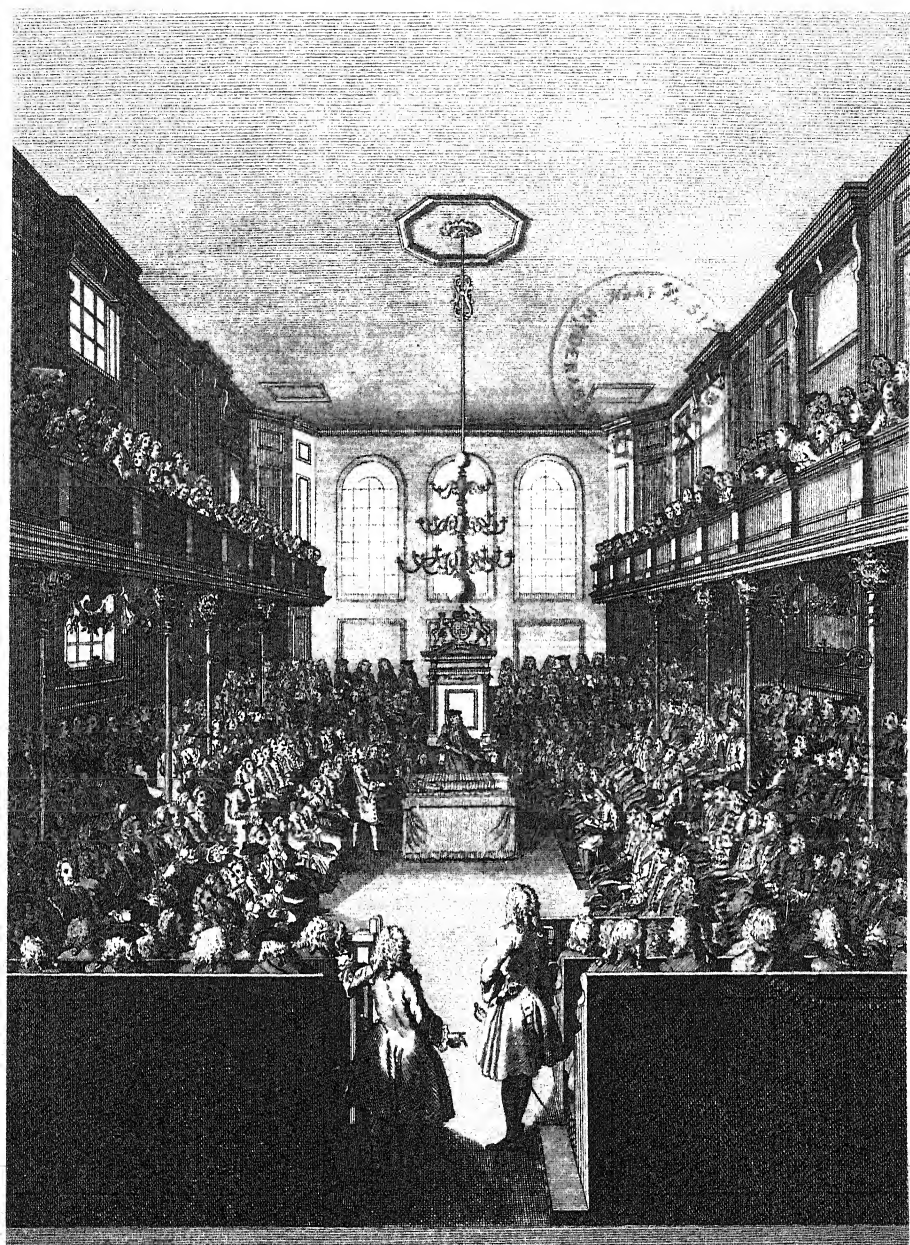
the reporter was usually about £1 a week, though there were men who commanded the princely sum of 30s.

As time went on the papers began to issue parliamentary reports more fully and accurately, and ministers would often supply copies of their speeches to the press. There were, however, those who still feared that garbled accounts of what went on in Parliament might do great harm outside, and there were others who dreaded the appearance of their own speeches in cold print.

In 1771 the printers of the *Morning Chronicle* and the *London Evening Post* were summoned to the House to be reprimanded by the Speaker as they knelt at the Bar.

A certain printer named Miller, who was a liveryman of the City, refused to come and a Serjeant-at-Arms was sent to arrest him. A fight ensued at the man's residence, and the Serjeant, instead of haling his man back to the House of Commons, found himself dragged off by a zealous constable to the neighbouring Guildhall. The Lord Mayor who was sitting with John Wilkes and another Alderman called Oliver, was outraged at this violation of ancient City charters. Miller was set free and the Serjeant-at-Arms was allowed bail on a charge of assault. The House of Commons was indignant and sent the Lord Mayor and Alderman Oliver, who both refused to make any sort of submission, as prisoners, to the Tower. Of John Wilkes they had already had such unpleasant experience that they did not dare proceed against him.

The Lord Mayor and Alderman became the heroes of the City. The mob cheered them to the echo, the Court of Common Council sent them the heartiest congratulations and the richest viands for their prison table. Writs of Habeas Corpus were demanded; but the Judges decided in favour of the Commons, and the Lord Mayor and Alderman Oliver remained in the Tower till the close of the parliamentary session. Then they came forth to the shouts, the bonfires and illuminations of an adoring City. They had put up a great fight for the privileges of the City, and incidentally for



*House of Commons*



the freedom of the press, and after this time the right of reporting parliamentary speeches was never questioned.

The newspaper tax was a heavy clog upon circulation. The original duty in 1712 was a halfpenny on papers of half a sheet or less, and a penny on larger journals. In 1756 an additional halfpenny was added, and the tax was gradually raised to  $1\frac{1}{2}d.$  and  $2d.$

A number of papers chiefly devoted to pornography and slander managed to evade the tax, and circulated furtively through the town.

The more reputable journals had a hard struggle to sell at the penny or twopence which was what most readers could afford. *The Times* cost as much as  $4\frac{1}{2}d.$  or  $6d.$  and there were few who could afford it. It could be read at the better clubs and coffee houses. Some of the inns took it in together with other papers, and charged a penny or two for their perusal.

There was a system which lasted for many years whereby a paper could be hired for an hour or two for a very small sum. The newsman went round to his customers and left *The Times* or whatever it might be, and called for it in an hour's or two hours' time. It cost more per hour to have a paper at breakfast-time than late in the evening, and many were the disputes and arguments about the time which had elapsed since it had been left or the lateness of its arrival.

The newsman blew his horn as he went along, to warn his paper reading clients that they must fold up the scanty sheets of print, and have them ready when he knocked upon the door.

When the evening papers came out, and there were several of these at the end of the century, the newsman sallied out again. The Royal Exchange had its own particular newsmen who must be served first and who rushed off immediately with the latest intelligence. Then when the London papers were distributed, the country papers had to be taken in bundles to the various inns and coach offices and despatched.

At Christmas the newsman came round with a copy of verses which he presented to his patrons, who in return gave him some small gratuity.

Cowper thus describes the contents of a newspaper :

What is in it but a map of busy life,  
 Its fluctuations and its vast concerns ?  
 Houses in ashes and the fall of stocks  
 Births, deaths and marriages, the grand debate.  
 The popular harangue, the tart reply  
 The logic and the wisdom and the wit  
 And the loud laugh.  
 Cat'racts of declamation, thunder here,  
 There forests of no meaning spread the page  
 In which all comprehension wanders lost,  
 While fields of pleasantry amuse us here  
 With merry descants on a nation's woes.  
 The rest appears a wilderness of strange  
 But gay confusion ; roses for the cheeks  
 And lilies for the brow of faded age ;  
 Teeth for the toothless, ringlets for the bald.  
 Heaven, earth and ocean plundered for their sweets.  
 Nectarean essences, Olympian dew,  
 Sermons and city feasts, and fav'rite airs  
 Ætherial journeys, submarine exploits,  
 And Katerfelto with his hair on end !

It seems, indeed, that the newspapers of the eighteenth century bore a strong resemblance to those of the present day. If we examined them, however, we should notice some great differences. Not only were they small in size and generally more expensive, but the most respectable allowed themselves a latitude which the lowest rag of the modern press would hardly contemplate. The highest in the land was subject to their attacks.

Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, young, beautiful and very unhappy, became the target for the abuse of newspaper writers and lampoonists, nor did they spare her husband. The Duke's amours were set out at length and in detail in the *Town and Country Magazine*. This periodical lived upon its scandals, which, unhappily for the victims, were generally founded upon fact.

Some papers levied a kind of blackmail.

When Cagliostro first came to England he was approached by a reporter who promised to write him up if he would hand



over a sum of money. The Count indignantly refused, and the reporter went away to launch an attack upon him in his paper.

It seems strange that such libellous attacks should have been tolerated. Occasionally, it is true, some editor was thrashed by an indignant victim but usually newspaper calumnies were received with a shrug of the shoulders as something too degraded to be noticed. They also made very pleasant and exhilarating reading for the victim's friends.

Lord Ligonier certainly wished to prosecute a newspaper for having stated that he was eighty years of age.

"His lawyer," Walpole says, "told him it was impossible—a tradesman indeed might prosecute as such a report might affect his credit."

"Well, then," said the old man, "I may prosecute too, for I can prove I was going to marry a great fortune, who thought I was but seventy-four, the newspapers have said I am eighty and she will not have me."

The great art of newspaper advertisement was then in its infancy, but some advertisements make curious reading. Steele gives us a delightful account of this form of literature :

"To consider this subject," he says, "in its most ridiculous lights advertisements are of great use to the vulgar. First of all they are instruments of ambition. A man that is by no means big enough for the *Gazette*, may easily creep into the advertisements ; by which means we often see an apothecary in the same paper of news with a plenipotentiary or a running footman with an ambassador.

"An advertisement from Piccadilly goes down to posterity with an article from Madrid, and John Bartlett of Goodman's Fields is celebrated in the same paper with the Emperor of Germany. . . .

"A second use which this sort of writing hath been turned to of late years has been the management of controversy, insomuch that above half the advertisements one meets with nowadays are purely polemical. The inventors of strops for razors have written against one another this way for several years, and that with great bitterness ; as the whole argument pro and con in the case of the morning gown is still carried

on after the same manner. I need not mention the several proprietors of Dr. Anderson's pills, nor take notice of the many satirical works of this nature so frequently published by Dr. Clark who has had the confidence to advertise upon that learned Knight, my very worthy friend Sir William Read. But I shall not interpose in their quarrel.

"Sir William can give him his own in advertisements that in the judgment of the impartial are as well penned as the doctor's.

"The third and last use of these writings is to inform the world where they may be furnished with almost everything that is necessary for life. If a man has pains in the head, cholicks in his bowels, or spots on his cloaths, he may here meet with proper cures and remedies. If a man would recover a wife or a horse that is stolen or strayed, if he wants new sermons, electuaries, asses' milk or anything else either for his body or his mind this is the place to look for them in public."

Steele dismisses this subject with a public admonition to Michael Parrot, that "he do not presume any more to mention a certain worm he knows of, which by the way has grown seven foot in my memory, for if I am not much mistaken, it is the same that was but nine foot long about six months ago."

Besides purely comic advertisements there are others which read curiously in these days.

"The pleasant villa at Fulham with orchards and fish-ponds" is now a pleasant dream, nor does anyone expect to rent a commodious residence in a fashionable London square for as little as £50 a year.

Dr. Johnson remembered "a washball that had a quality truly wonderful. It gave an exquisite edge to a razor." . . . "The trade of advertising," he continues, "is now so near perfection that it is not easy to propose any improvement."

Newspaper advertisements may have been of great assistance to British trade, but they were of even more use in preserving the independence of the British press.

In Paris the Bureau d'Adresse exhibited all sorts of advertisements, and the newspaper editor was forced to eke out a precarious living by subsidies from factions or the Court.

In England a similar sort of institution known as the Register Office, carried on feebly for many years, and finally perished. Advertisers preferred the press, and the income which they brought to the various newspapers enabled some of them, at least, to preserve their integrity.

We have been considering newspapers and magazines as if they were one and the same thing, and indeed the difference between the two classes of periodicals was often very slight.

The *Tatler*, the *Spectator* and the *Idler* were called newspapers; in these days they would be known as magazines. The *Town and Country Magazine*, on the other hand, bears a very horrid resemblance to some of our more personal and scurrilous newspapers.

The *Gentleman's Magazine* was started in 1731 by Edward Cave, "Silvanus Urban," with the avowed object of collecting "essays on various subjects for entertainment, from the daily and weekly newspapers then circulating in England." Original contributions were also admitted. It was an excellent periodical and can still be read with pleasure. One of its best features were the obituary notices which it published and which are still consulted.

Johnson wrote criticisms and essays for the *Literary Magazine* or *Universal Review*, which professed to contain, if not everything, at least a very great deal. In this periodical he defended Admiral Byng against the popular clamour, which led to his execution.

He also rose up as the champion of tea drinking against Jonas Hanway, who imputed every evil to that harmless practice.

The *Monthly Review* which was founded by Griffiths, the bookseller, in 1749, was the first periodical to devote itself exclusively to the criticism of new books. In religion and politics it was Low Church and Whig, and the High Church Tories set up a rival, the *Critical Review*, under the editorship of Smollett. Griffiths was furious and declared that his review was not written "by physicians without practice, authors without learning, or writers without judgment."

Smollett, though he might have no practice, was never lacking in repartee. He rejoined that his review on the other hand was not written "by a parcel of obscure hirelings under the restraint of a bookseller and his wife, who presume to revise, alter and amend the articles."

In 1749 the first magazine was founded for women. It was called *The Ladies' Magazine*, and came out once a fortnight. Many of its pages were filled with questions on English history, such as the following.

"Q. Pray describe the persons of the English.

A. They are for the most part handsome, grey eyed, fair complexioned, have light hair and are well shaped. Their women are very beautiful and have greater privileges than those of other countries."

This magazine lasted for five years, and was followed in 1769 by another periodical which bore the same name, with the sub-title of *An Amusing Companion for the Fair Sex*. It contained articles on dress and needlework, with some literary criticism, and bore a strong resemblance to the women's magazines of the present day.

It even encouraged its readers to ask its advice and answered such questions as—"Are cats inhabited by evil spirits?" "Ought a woman to continue to live with a wicked husband?"

The influence of the press to-day is very great, though perhaps not so great as some newspaper men imagine; but in the eighteenth century its power for good and evil was enormous. The printed word among semi-literate people was looked upon with the greatest possible awe and respect. If some papers had a demoralising effect, others undoubtedly stood for honesty and decency, and their influence upon the moral progress of the century was very great.

## SOME NATURAL EVENTS

**A**MID the welter of wars and revolutions the records of commerce and of conquests, and the strife of parties which make up the history of eighteenth-century England, a few events of Nature were of so striking a character that some account of them has been handed down to us.

Storm, frost, earthquake and flood seem to have afflicted our ancestors to an extraordinary degree and the memory of them remained in men's minds. In the eighteenth century people still talked of the fearful storms which raged when Oliver Cromwell died. Nature wept and lamented that so great a man had been taken, so said his supporters, though the Royalists contended that the Devil came in the storm and fetched away his own.

No one of any note died in the great hurricane of 1703. It was not confined to the neighbourhood of London or even to Great Britain ; but swept over France and Germany. The full fury of it was felt in the metropolis. A strong south-west wind had been blowing for about ten days. It reached gale force on November 26, and the storm lasted for twenty-four hours. After a day of driving wind, the barometer, which had not long been introduced into England, fell lower than had ever been observed before. Householders went nervously to bed to be awakened—if any of them had slept—after midnight by the swaying of the house, and the clash of falling tiles and masonry. They cowered in fright in their tottering dwellings, for to go out into the streets was to court destruction.

Much of the hoarse roaring of the wind sounded like thunder. "The air," we are told, "was full of meteors and

fiery vapours," and some imagined that an earthquake was added to the other horrors.

The city had lately been rebuilt after the Great Fire in Charles II's reign, but there were still on the outskirts of the metropolis many cottages of wood or cobb, thatched with straw or reed. These were levelled to the ground, and even strong brick houses were destroyed.

"Such a shock was given to a well built brick house in the skirts of the city, by a stack of chimnies falling on the next houses, that the inhabitants imagined it was just coming down on their heads; but opening the door to attempt an escape into the garden, the danger was so apparent that they all thought fit to surrender to the disposal of Almighty Providence, and expect their graves in the ruins of their house, rather than meet most certain destruction in the open garden; for, unless they could have gone above 200 yards from any building, there had been no security, for the force of the wind blew the tiles point blank, though their weight inclined them downwards, and in several broad streets the windows were broken by the flying of tile-sherds from the other side, and, where there was room for them to fly, tiles were blown above 30 or 40 yards, and stuck from 5 to 8 inches into the solid earth. Pieces of timber, iron, and sheets of lead, from higher buildings, were blown much further."

In the *Verney Letters* there is an account of the great storm from Elizabeth Adam, who writes thus to Lord Fermanagh:

"I bless God we have escaped with our lives, but our house is much dameiged, part of the chimnis is down and sum of our neibors chimnis fell on our hous and brock our rooffe and we look every moment when the hous wod ly flat, and we got out into the Church porch and stood ther for som hours expecting every moment to see the hous fall. But God was more mercyfull to us and did preserve it, though it is very much shatred. Pegg cannot ly at hom, but I doe. My frit has been so great I know not when I shall recover it. I heare the Bishop of Bath and Wells and his lady is killed, but am not sertin of the truth of this; ther is one Simson a scrivener in the city that is killed and severall mor, too many for me to name. It is said that wind has dun more harm than the fier of London."

St. James's Palace felt the full fury of the blast. "Part of the palace of St. James's," we read, "was blown down and a woman killed by the fall of the chimney. Her Majesty was alarmed and got up with his Highness, the Princes and all the maids of honour."

The old oaks which Wolsey had planted in St. James's Park were blown down in scores.

Defoe tells us that the ships in the Thames were torn from their moorings and driven down the river; some were carried to the shore by the force of the wind and a high spring tide. Others went drifting helplessly down stream. It was computed that there were

"near 700 sail of ships, some very great ones between Shadwell and Limehouse inclusive; the posture is not to be imagined but by those who saw it; some vessels lay heeling off, with the bow of another ship, over her waist, and the stem of another upon her forecastle; the boltsprits of some drove into the cabin windows of others; some lay with their stems turned up so high, that the tide flowed into their forecastles before they could come to rights; some lay so leaning upon others, that the undermost vessels would sink before the others could float; the number of masts, boltsprits and yards, split and broke; the staving heads, sterns and carved work; tearing and destruction of rigging; squeezing boats to pieces between the ships, could not be reckoned. There was hardly a vessel to be seen that had not suffered some damage, in one or all those articles."

About sixty barges and lighters were sunk between London Bridge and Hammersmith, and as many more cut adrift and damaged, and others were dashed to pieces on the piers of the bridge, and about three hundred ships' boats were lost. The larger vessels fared better, though there was scarcely one that was not seriously damaged, and many sailors were drowned. Two great ships with large quantities of goods on board, were sunk, five West Indiamen were driven upon the mud banks below Tilbury Fort, but luckily the high spring tide so dangerous to smaller craft, floated them off.

London looked like a city that had been bombarded.

## SOME NATURAL EVENTS

About twenty houses had been blown down bodily, and hundreds of others were wrecked. Two thousand stacks of chimneys had fallen, the lead roofs of many churches including Westminster Abbey had been swept off and rolled up "like skins of parchment."

Nearly every roof in London was stripped, and the price of tiles went up from 2*s.* a thousand to £6.

Bricklayers were able to command the unprecedented wage of 5*s.* a day, and there was far more work than they could cope with for many months. The boys at Christ's Hospital did their lessons under makeshift boards of deal, for several years, and the Benchers of the Temple could not get a new roof on their Hall for many months.

The casualties were not so great as might have been supposed. Forty persons were known to have been killed, and about two hundred were injured. There were also some wonderful escapes.

In a house in the Strand which sheltered several persons "four of them," we are told, "fell with a great part of the house, etc., three stories, and several two; and though buried in ruins, were taken out unhurt; of these three were children; one that lay by itself, in a little bed near its nurse; another in a cradle; and the third was found hanging (as it were wrap'd up) in some curtains that hitched by the way; neither of them received the least damage.

"In another place, as a minister was crossing a court near his house, a stone from the top of a chimney upward of one hundred and forty pounds weight, fell close to his heels, and cut between his footsteps four inches deep into the ground. Soon after upon drawing in his arm which he had held out on some occasion, another stone of near the same weight and size brush'd by his elbow, and fell close to his foot, which must necessarily in the eye of reason, have killed him had it fallen, while it was extended.

"In the Poultry, where two boys were lying in a garret, a huge stack of chimnies fell in, which making its way through that and all the other floors to the cellar, it was followed by the bed with the boys asleep in it, who first waked in that gloomy place of confusion without the least hurt."



## A PUBLIC FAST

The storm was at its worst at night, when most of the citizens were in their houses, and thanks to Wren and to those who employed him, a solid type of building had been erected in London. If such a hurricane had occurred before the Fire, half London would have lain in ruins.

The following proclamation was issued by the Queen :

“Whereas, by the late most terrible and dreadful Storms of Wind, with which it hath pleased Almighty God to afflict the greatest part of this our Kingdom, on Friday and Saturday, the Twenty sixth and Twenty seventh day of November last, some of our Ships of War and many Ships of our loving Subjects have been destroyed and lost at Sea, and great numbers of our subjects, serving on board the same have perished, and many houses and other building of our good Subjects have been either wholly thrown down and demolished or very much damnified and defaced, and thereby several persons have been killed, and many Stacks of Corn and Hay thrown down and scattered abroad, to the great damage and impoverishment of many others, especially the poorer sort, and great numbers of timber and other trees have by the said Storm been torn up by the roots in many parts of this our said Kingdom; a Calamity of this sort so dreadful and astonishing, that the like hath not been seen or felt in the memory of any person living in this our Kingdom, and which loudly calls for the deepest and most solemn humiliation of us and our people; therefore out of a deep and pious sense of what we and all our people have suffered by the said dreadful Wind and Storm (which we most humbly acknowledge to be a token of the Divine displeasure, and that it was the infinite mercy of God that we and our people were not thereby wholly destroyed), we have resolved and do hereby command, that a General Public Fast be observed, etc.”

This public fast was accordingly observed throughout England, on January 19 following,

“with great seriousness and devotion by all orders and denominations. The protestants, dissenters, notwithstanding their objections to the interference of the civil magistrates in matters of religion, deeming this to be an occasion wherein they might unite with their countrymen in openly bewailing

## SOME NATURAL EVENTS

the general calamity, rendered the supplication universal, by opening their places of worship, and every church and meeting house was crowded."

Oldmixon declares that the fast

"was kept with more signs of devotion and sincerity than ever I saw anything of the kind; the terror the tempest had left on people's minds contributing much to their affectionate discharge of that duty."

Joseph Taylor, a bookseller in Paternoster Row, was not content with a general public fast. He was a Baptist and desired to record his deliverance, by some memorial in his own church. He accordingly left a sum of money for a sermon to be preached every year at the Baptist Church in Little Wilde Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields. The congregation added £5 to the £40 which Taylor bequeathed, and the interest on that sum was distributed as follows :

	£	s.	d.
For the sermon . . . . .	1	1	0
Distributing the notices . . . . .		2	6
Clerk . . . . .		2	6
Two pew openers, 2s. 6d. each . . . . .		5	0

This sermon was preached annually for more than a hundred years.

There is a widespread idea in the present day that winters are not what they used to be. However this may be, as regards those within living memory it certainly applies to the weather of the eighteenth century. The winters then could be, and often were bitterly cold, and on several occasions the Thames was frozen over.

Perhaps the longest of these frosts occurred in the year 1788-9. The river was frozen from the end of November for seven weeks. The distress that this prolonged cold entailed was very great. It was computed that 40,000 persons who got their living on the river or by its banks, were standing idle. No ships could come into the port, or start forth on their accustomed voyages. Captains and crews hung

## THE FROST FAIR

about the river-side public-houses, porters and watermen looked vainly for work. Some stood about in groups offering to assist the timid across the river.

It is curious that in none of the pictures of frost fairs on the Thames are we shown crowds of people skating such as are depicted by the Dutch painters. It was a sport which had been practised in England since the days of the Northmen, but it may be that the Londoners had not often the opportunity and so had lost the desire to excel in it, or possibly the surface was too rough. The cold grew more intense, and the ice thickened. Carts and carriages could be driven across the river.

It then occurred to some enterprising person that a frost fair on the Thames would be an excellent venture. Within a day or two the river became a fair-ground which might have rivalled Bartholomew's. There were travelling theatres and puppet shows, giants and dwarfs, stalls for gingerbreads and brandy balls, black-puddings and Dutch snuff. An ox was roasted whole, and slices of the meat sold for 6*d.* or 1*s.* A printing press was even set up, and a ballad or a broadside produced and sold as a curiosity. The fair lasted till milder weather ensued and the ice began to melt.

On February 8, 1750, London was visited by an earthquake. It seems to have been quite a severe shock for this country, where earthquakes are happily mild. Houses rocked, chimney stacks fell down, and the judges and counsel in Westminster Hall were so startled at the swaying of the building, that they abandoned their cases and rushed into the street. Everywhere people fled from their houses, thinking that they were about to fall upon them.

The scientific men of the day might know something about earthquakes and their causes. To the ordinary man, they were clearly a visitation of Providence, a portent, a warning, or it might be, a retribution. The clergy preached on the subject from most London pulpits, and letters appeared in the more serious journals full of warning, prophecy and reproof.

## SOME NATURAL EVENTS

Then exactly four weeks later very early in the morning, another and more serious shock was felt. It was said that the open ground in St. James's Park visibly moved, that there were flashes of lightning and that the fish in the lake jumped several feet out of the water in fright and perturbation. Be this as it may, the houses certainly rocked as they had done in the previous earthquake. China was swept from the shelves and thrown upon the floor, chimney stacks fell down, and the bells of the City churches began to ring.

This shock, like its predecessors, was confined to London and its environs. It was obvious to the startled citizens that such occurrences were warnings or prophecies. The Bishop of London was convinced that the iniquity of the people was calling down the wrath of heaven, and he preached a sermon to this effect calling on men to repent. For the most part his exhortations fell upon deaf ears. 'The way of repentance is hard ; it was easier to take passage on the Yarmouth smack, or step into the Barnet fly and thus flee the accursed city.

Crowds of people rushed into the country. The *Evening Post* remonstrated with them. It was the people and not the place, they politely intimated, that were likely to be damned, and if they sought salvation they must leave their vices behind them.

Other papers talked of the natural causes of earthquakes, and some declared that the occurrence was nothing but an air-quake, whatever that might have been. The name was thought to be reassuring, but unfortunately another and most sinister report spread like wildfire through the City. It was said that these two earthquakes were as nothing compared with the great shock which would occur on April 8, when the whole of London and its suburbs would be destroyed.

Reports such as these have not been unknown in our own day ; but very few treat them seriously. The credulity and superstition of the common people and even their betters, in the eighteenth century was, however, amazing. Terrified and excited as they were, they believed this new report implicitly, and thousands rushed out of the city. Those who

could afford it, journeyed by road or river to some distant spot. The roads near the metropolis were crowded with vehicles, and many people slept in their coaches.

“Several women,” said Walpole, writing to Sir Thomas Mann, “have made earthquake gowns, that is warm gowns to sit out of doors all to-night. These are of the most courageous. One woman, still more heroic, is come to town, on purpose; she says all her friends are in London, and she will not survive them. But what will you think of Lady Catherine Pelham, Lady Francis Grundel, and Lord and Lady Galway who go this evening to an inn ten miles out of town, where they are to play at brag till five in the morning and then come back, I suppose to look for the bones of their husbands and families under the rubbish.”

The poor thronged the fields and open spaces around London, or spent the night in boats upon the river. In many houses only the sick, the aged and infirm remained. According to the prophecy destruction was to fall upon the City in the morning. From the earliest intimation of dawn till nearly noon the populace waited and watched. Nothing happened. Then slowly as a blessed sense of security dawned upon them they returned home to neglected duties, to the sick and aged whom they had basely deserted.

The author of the rumour was searched for and found. He was a soldier in the Horse Guards. Whether he had merely put forth his prophecy in a spirit of mischief or was one of those ingenious persons who, by snatching Bible texts from context, declare that they can foretell the future, we do not know. The privates in the Guards were of a different and more literate class than ordinary private soldiers. It may be he could quote chapter and verse for his prognostications. The authorities, however, exasperated with the consequence of them, clapped him into prison as a deceiver. The Bishop of London's sermon was printed, and as many as 40,000 copies were distributed.

“Between the French and the earthquakes,” says Horace Walpole, “you have no notion how good we are grown;

nobody makes a suit of clothes now but of sack cloth turned up with ashes."

The eclipse of the sun in the year 1748 caused almost as much consternation as the earthquake.

"Pray, dear Miss Talbot," says Mrs. Carter, "are you all quiet in Oxfordshire? If you are, you can have no idea of the uproar occasioned here by the eclipse, and the strange frights under which people labour. One is stunned all day with the bawling of lamentable prophecies, and a form of prayer. Some run away from London, and other deeming it the safest place, come to it, and really such as one would imagine should have more sense. The beggars in the streets actually insult folks who refuse to give them small beer, by clapping their hands and threatening that the day of judgment will be next Thursday. Others, as I find by a dialogue I overheard in a neighbouring court, are of opinion that all the women in the world only are to die. Such are our apprehensions in the city. And I lately heard in St. James's Place, that a lady on receiving an invitation to a rout, excused herself by thinking it really not decent to play cards on that day; so perhaps she thinks it more decent to put it off till Sunday.

"I was greatly pleased with a sermon I heard last Sunday at Spitalfields church, where there is a vast congregation of the lower sort of people. I could not help esteeming the preacher for his good natured attempt to free poor ignorant harmless folk from the foolish alarms they are thrown into by those wicked, lying prognosticators, who go yelling about the streets, and endeavouring to dismay the hearts of Christians with the 'Signs of the heavens'—those pagan terrors."

It may seem that the London fog is ever with us, and was not peculiarly a product of the eighteenth century. The few poor mists which envelop us nowadays, would, however, have appeared very contemptible to our ancestors. They had far finer and denser fogs. The marshes round the metropolis were undrained, and heavy mists engulfed the city. A dozen coal fires burnt in a house in which we might have one. Factory chimneys belched forth smoke, unheeded and unchecked.

Grosley, travelling in England in 1765, complained that "the smoke gains ground every day; if the increase of London proceeds as far as it may the inhabitants must at last bid adieu to all hopes of ever seeing the sun. This smoke being loaded with terrestrial particles . . . forms a cloud which the sun penetrates but rarely; a cloud which suffers the sun to break out only now and then. . . .

"On the 26th of April St. James's Park, incessantly covered with fogs, smoke and rain, that scarce left a possibility of distinguishing objects at four paces, was filled with walkers, who were an object of musing admiration to me. . . . When the spring was completely opened, all this part, trees, alleys, benches, grass plots, were still impregnated with a sort of black stuff, formed by the successive deposits . . . left by the smoke of winter. . . . The smoke forms black rains and produces all the ill effects that may be expected from it on the clothes of those who are exposed to it . . . for this reason London swarms with the shops of scourers, busied in scouring, repairing and new furbishing the clothes that are smoked in this manner. This scouring is perpetual."

As the century advanced and the metropolis increased in size the atmosphere became worse and worse. An idea was conceived by foreigners, an idea which is not yet entirely abandoned, that London was a city of Cimmerian darkness, in which men groped their way for eight or nine months of the year.

Living in such an atmosphere the Londoner naturally fell a prey to every kind of pulmonary disease, and consumption was rampant. It was not until the Essex marshes were drained in the following century, and gas and electricity took the place of open fires, that the good old pea-soup fogs of Grosley and of Dickens became so extremely rare that when one of them comes to London it has a long paragraph in the papers, together with murders and railway accidents and other infrequent events.





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